

# The Commonweal

## *A Weekly Review of Literature, The Arts and Public Affairs*

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Published weekly and copyrighted, 1936, in the United States, by the Calvert Publishing Corporation, 386 Fourth Avenue, New York, N. Y.  
Entered as second-class matter, February 9, 1934, at the post office at New York, N. Y., under the act of March 3, 1879.  
United States: \$5.00; Canada: \$5.50; Foreign: \$6.00. Single Copies: \$.10.

VOLUME XXIV

Friday, June 19, 1936

NUMBER 8

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## GOOD-WILL IN ACTION

EVEN in the midst of the enormous flood of press and radio publicity with which the presidential campaign begins, unusual interest has been attached to that other flood of oratory which accompanies the outpouring of college graduates into the troubled world outside the college cloisters. The men and women whose duty it has been to address the graduates have, for the most part, been distinguished by their efforts to face really fundamental problems. Particular attention was given, for example, by many speakers to that struggle which is basic in this age of crisis between the forces of liberty and those of tyranny and repression. That struggle, which has been openly proceeding in Europe, where so many nations have already been at least temporarily conquered, or else badly shaken, by the new tyrannies, may, and probably will, become an active issue in America. It may be averted before it becomes more than a possible menace if thoughtful Amer-

icans realize its potential dangers and array all their influence against its poisonous growth. The Black Legion is a sinister proof of its peril.

Conspicuous among the many warnings given by highly responsible leaders of public opinion was the statement made by Mr. Roger Williams Straus of New York, speaking to the graduates of Bucknell University, who said:

"I believe that the never-ending battle between the forces of darkness and enlightenment during the next twenty-five years will revolve upon this issue: the form of government we call democracy championing the conception of individual rights; dictatorship, by an individual or by a special group, demanding the submission of all into a controlled mass of robot-like nonentities."

Mr. Straus was giving expression not to a mere platitude, however sincerely believed, but as one of the co-chairmen of the National Conference of Jews and Christians he spoke out of knowledge

and experience of the struggle to which he drew attention. For although the National Conference of Jews and Christians, which is a cooperating group of Protestants, Jews and Catholics, is concerned, as an organization, solely with American problems, nobody knows more clearly than Mr. Straus how deeply our American situation has been disturbed by the religious and racial conflicts in other lands. It was in recognition of the work of highly practical good-will performed by the National Conference of Jews and Christians that Bucknell University bestowed upon Mr. Straus, and Mr. Newton D. Baker, co-chairmen of the conference, honorary degrees.

A striking instance of the practical activities carried on by the conference calls for the special appreciation of Catholics. This was the statement issued not by the conference directly—for, as stated above, it confines its direct activities to purely American problems—but by Dr. Everett R. Clinchy, a Presbyterian clergyman, who is executive director of the conference, on behalf of a group of forty-eight Jewish and Protestant clergymen protesting against the vicious and palpably unjust attack of the Nazi government of Germany on the Catholic clergy of that country, in which charges of gross immorality have been made in such a fashion as to smear the reputation of large numbers of them, without providing for any opportunity to separate any who are possibly guilty from the overwhelming majority of innocent and vilely persecuted priests and Brothers. When it is remembered how eagerly professional bigots and profiteers in prejudice—such as the leaders of the Black Legion—will seize upon the Nazi charges, and will spread them in this country, if the charges themselves are not utterly discredited, the prompt action of this group of Jewish and Protestant clergymen should be recognized as a highly patriotic service, as well as one distinguished by a sense of religious justice and decency for which Catholics will be duly grateful.

In their statement, the group of clergymen clearly reveal how “the almost unique brutality and unfairness of the most recent attack launched by the government of Germany, charging Catholic clergy with gross immorality,” is part and parcel of the unrelenting efforts of that government to subject all forms of religion, Protestant, Jewish and Catholic, to the sole authority and dominance of the Nazi State. On this point (by far the most important), the statement says:

“He who steals my purse steals trash—and the religious orders, many dioceses, and numerous individuals were robbed of their funds during the course of the now well-known trials for violation of the foreign exchange laws under which confiscatory fines and long prison sentences were imposed.

“After this effort failed to accomplish the desire of the Nazi government, widespread efforts were

made to pin the label of ‘traitor’ on all priests who opposed Nazi teaching at any point. Now it is the good name of the Catholic priesthood which is to be defamed, in the hope that so the ultimate suppression of all universal Jewish and Christian beliefs by the totalitarian State can be most speedily effected.”

As the statement goes on to explain, the attacks are not new. They have been going on for more than a year. The Nazi Propaganda Office has been seeking evidence—and manufacturing false evidence, as Prince Hubertus zu Loewenstein revealed months ago, and as did many English newspapers that were in close touch with what was going on in Germany. The archives of many dioceses and religious communities were ransacked for possible records of offenses by individuals. If any were actually found, such evidence was used to slander the whole body of the clergy. Moreover, all avenues of direct information about the trials, and the sources for getting at the facts, were blocked by the Nazi government. As the statement goes on to say:

“News concerning the Cologne hearings is sparse and vague. It is obvious that no foreign correspondent attended; and since every vestige of a free German Catholic press has long since disappeared, no information can be obtained from any source not identified with the German Propaganda Office. Our conviction is that if a tenth as much of the pitiless glare of publicity were turned on the present proceedings, the results would be the same as they were at the infamous Reichstag fire trial. The reputation of the German Catholic clergy for uprightness of living and loyalty to moral principle is so well established and unequivocal that the greatest caution should be exercised before trusting even one of the reports.”

The necessity for joint action on the part of Protestants, Jews and Catholics to defend their common interests, their universal principles, which are the true foundations of American civilization, is strongly illustrated by this splendid statement. Catholic support of the National Conference of Jews and Christians will be strengthened by it.

## *Week by Week*

**T**IME out for the Cleveland convention! It was obvious that, to an extent fairly unprecedented, the delegated representatives of the G.O.P. were meeting without their minds made up in advance. The chance was surely given to rebuild the party from the ground up—to dissociate both platforms and leaders from the misadventures of the post-war period, and yet to make it clearly antithetical to the “movement” which Mr. Roosevelt has spon-

The  
Trend of  
Events

sored. By the time this comment reaches our audience that opportunity may have been grasped or muffed. We shall all know in due time. Obviously, however, there will be some kind of frankly stated division between those who believe that the use of federal power witnessed during the past four years is unsound in theory and unwise in practice, and those who feel that the only source of trouble is limitation of that power. It would be futile to deny that good arguments can be found to bolster up both points of view. If they are carefully presented, if rabid emotionalism and class bias can be reduced to the indispensable minimum while common sense rules, the next months would be worth a good deal in the way of civic education. When the Republicans gathered in Cleveland, all eyes turned to four notably strong men—Borah, Vandenberg, Landon, Hoover. It will be a genuinely important moment when we know who has emerged. Whether Congress will then find it possible to settle problems of legislation still awaiting their solution is a query which involves many hopes, some of them doomed to disappointment this year. Indispensable tax and relief measures will, of course, be agreed upon sometime, somehow.

**T**HERE is no questioning the seriousness of what happened in France. Socialist labor did not hesitate to exploit a political victory which few really anticipated and the final outcome of which nobody can predict. The voting masses are almost evenly divided between those who favor a Leftist, "welfare" course and those who favor the traditional order of thrift, small property and *rentes*. If M. Blum's followers get out of hand, the second group is bound to suffer far more than they did during the era of post-war devaluation. But—and the point is important—the present situation affords no parallel to the revolutions of 1798 and 1848. The conservative public is numerically strong and tied to no hide-bound ideology. It would mean grave conflict if the attempt were made to carry out even a semi-Socialist program. Indeed, one can hardly avoid feeling that the real Right would cheer a radical uprising because of the odds in favor of its being put down. But M. Blum wants no such turbulence. He has said so, and few will doubt that he means what he says. The present government is to carry out some of the reform plans about which the followers of Juarez have long talked. It is emphatically not to undertake engineering a grandiose change. One may, in view of the grave news emanating from France during the week, doubt that Blum can succeed. Financial, wage, organization problems may be too much for him. Nevertheless, accepting the elecorate for what it is, we feel that if anybody can steer

the French ship of state through the stormy waters encompassing it, he is the man. The deplorable social and political short-sightedness of the Gallic bourgeoisie is responsible for much that must be expiated; but even its harshest critics will shrink from wishing, for the good of Europe, that retribution will be as swift and relentless as it was in Italy and Germany. Meanwhile it is impressive that spokesmen for unions which called the greatest strike in recent French history expressed the conviction that more could be done for workers suffering from the scourge of ultra-capitalism through democratic methods than through autocracy.

**W**HEN five justices of the Supreme Court decided to outlaw the New York minimum wage law for women, they did something to public opinion which is comparable—we do not say equivalent—to a few activities by Louis XVI.

Another declaration of unconstitutionality? Yes. But when it outlawed various New Deal experiments, the Court was confirming suspicions latent even in the minds of many who endorsed a wider use of federal power. The NRA, for example, was a new thing. No one was amazed by the good it had accomplished; many were irritated by the flaws in its operation. It was a totally different thing to deny to a state the duty to safeguard women against industrial unfairness, on the ground that the commonwealth has no right to impair freedom of contract. All of us could have understood, even now when living and working conditions are frequently so immoral, that the national government must be restrained from acting as a kind of universal wage arbiter. But what is "freedom of contract" in New York? No great experience is required to understand how deep shocking abuses have cut into the very fiber of American life. Our very blood is tainted by the grasping miserliness of operatives who know they are dealing with persons compelled to accept work at almost any figure. No concept of competition which is in any way defensible would involve the right of employers under existing conditions to hire labor for what are starvation dollars and cents. The Supreme Court, ideally speaking, is a defense of liberties. More prosaically it is at least a barrier against the wilfulness of government. But it has now, in the minds of many, become a terrible obstacle in the road of moral progress. Certainly there is nowhere in any Catholic or Christian system of morality any room whatever for a commendation of the minimum wage decision. It is bad. It is a blunder of magnitude. It will do more to undermine the prestige of the Court than everything else said or done during the past four years. If the decision was merely the result of unfortunate

#### A Crisis in Gaul

legal wording in the measure condemned, the fact should be made known promptly. If a new constitutional definition of the powers of the states is required, that too should speedily become evident.

**GRADUATES** in profusion have once more been sped upon their ways. Few Americans realize that no other country witnesses a phenomenon comparable to Commencement, and fewer still perceive the earnestness with which this phenomenon is greeted.

Doubtless many of us view the affair with sentiments of undisguised boredom. The average orator of the occasion secretly faces his audience in apologetic dismay; and the normal citizen says that he would rather spend a week-end in Jersey City than sit through the tedium of degreasing. But as a matter of fact experience indicates that parents are always thrilled by Commencements. They run the gamut of emotions from jubilation to tears; and if anyone imagines that they do not follow every word of what is said he is a mightily mistaken person. As for the graduates, an external cynicism veils the deep satisfaction they feel as the day is rolling by. It is, we venture to say, easier for a man to recall what happened when he was graduated—even what was said when he was graduated—than it is to recollect any similar events. Of course the effect of Commencements in the aggregate is hardly reassuring. If young men and women did all they were advised to try, this world would be a stranger place than it is. Just one thing remains. An ethical, even a religious, note is dominant and testifies to the profound affection for the spirit which after all characterizes this most activist of peoples. We Americans dearly and forever love hitching our wagons to stars. Momentarily, in these latter June days, the act of coupling conduct to ideals has been accomplished before hundreds of thousands. The fact that it is covertly relished ought, in a measure, to be reassuring.

**THE SILVER** jubilee session of the Catholic Press Association, meeting in Columbus, Ohio, was marked by so many admirable things that picking any one of them for mention seems a slight by neglect of the others. Much of it, naturally, was routine character-

istic of such gatherings and much more was that unrecordable business of personal exchanges between friends and fellow workers with all of its unmeasurable values of sociability as well as social service. The latter are like the cloak-room conferences in Congress and there are those who believe that more is accomplished at these individualized conferences than at the formal proceedings in chamber. Our own focus of interest

on the recent meeting centered on the remarks by the new editor of *America* about the editorial freedom of the Catholic editor. It is such a common fiction in many people's minds that he has not any, and we know from personal experience how untrue this is, that we appreciate a just word about it. The hierarchy, the vocal and influential members of the clergy and of the laity, are so gentle, so generous, by and large, in any efforts to influence, or control, our editorial opinion that sometimes we sigh from an ineluctable feeling of neglect. As regards the common, or vulgar, idea as to such influence, it is simply 99 percent non-existent. This does not mean to say, as Father Talbot pointed out, that the Catholic editor can throw truth to the wind or forget his responsibility to the Faith. "That limitation is our greatest blessing," said Father Talbot, "because the dogmatic and moral content of our faith is such that if we submit to it we have the truth."

**IT WAS** not, we think, the gentling influence of the academe which prompted the constabulary of old Harvard town to do the good deed that got into the papers. They were only exhibiting the virtues of their kind. Considered as a class, policemen are our favorite citizens—and this independently of their quiet, casual heroism, and their unofficial charity to the desperate in emergencies; independently, too, of their collective looks—for beyond controversy, they are the best-looking group of men we have. No, it is their lighter social qualities and virtues we would praise. They help one rescue cats. They talk companionably to their horses. They look sedulously away from harmless drunks and derelicts whenever they can. Any given policeman may be cantankerous and bullying, but the betting is that he will be polite and even twinkling. When they ask you where the fire is, or if you can't read that sign, they often do it as if it were a matter of routine they would gladly dispense with. Most of them manage to be humorous while keeping within the limits of official decorum—no dweller in a metropolis but has a dozen personal stories. Best of all, they will meet you half way. If you are mannerly in a jam, they try to give you a break. "Do you *want* me to give you a ticket?" one can hear them asking misguided vociferators in tones of hurt astonishment. Hence, the dejected motorist who parked on the Cambridge curb and left them a note asking not to be ticketed, because his rear and spare were flat and his plugs wet, simply knew his men. His plea so disturbed the patrolman whose duty it was to affix the ticket, that he telephoned his sergeant. "He's had trouble enough already," was the decision of that kindly man. And once again life, as is its way, has caught up to Gilbert and Sullivan.

## WHAT OF PALESTINE?

By CYPRIAN M. FISHER

THE CLASHES between Jews and Arabs which have been described in a series of news dispatches are in themselves incidents of no very great individual importance. But the fact that they occur again and again proves beyond the shadow of a doubt that behind these visible disturbances a persistent conflict between the Arab and the Jewish population in the Holy Land keeps up. The attempt to describe these situations objectively would seem all the more worth while since the Christian public appears to be quite surprisingly unaware of what is really going on in a land which has once again become of the very greatest importance in political history. The threat to British hegemony in the Suez region and the Gulf of Aden as a result of Italian expansionism brings what is happening in Palestine to the center of the world stage.

What is the principal cause of the present strife? It is the fact that two promises given by London are contradictory. On the one hand Britain had assured the Arabs during the war that it would protect their national rights, and then proceeded once the war was over to favor splitting Arabia into the greatest number of possible states while expressly granting the Palestine Arabs a measure of self-government which should not be less than that enjoyed by other modern states. On the other hand British statesmanship solemnly pledged itself, in the Balfour Declaration of November 2, 1917, to create in Palestine a "national home for the Jewish people." These two promises have never been reconciled, are perhaps irreconcilable; and hence it is not surprising that both Jews and Arabs have in good faith accused the Mandate government of failure to keep its word.

During nearly twenty centuries after the coming of Christ the Jews clung firmly to the world of the synagog and to the interpretation of the Messiah as one who would restore their race to power and glory in the Promised Land. They did so despite the fact that they were scattered among the Christian peoples. The last flickering of this religious life—which since the eighteenth century has steadily dwindled—flared up again when modern anti-Semitism gained ground, and was absorbed into the ideology which Theodor Herzl, an eloquent free-thinker, formulated in his utopistic description of a "Jewish State." Herzl's

*It goes without saying that recent disturbances in Palestine are especially troubling because the country had become an indispensable place of refuge for Jews persecuted in other lands. The fact remains, however, that conflict between Pan-Arabs and Zionists is eminently natural. We believe that the following paper on the situation by a European journalist familiar with the situation is as nearly impartial as any one commentary could be. It does not express the opinions of THE COMMONWEAL.—The Editors.*

romantic expectations were troubled with very little insight into the realities of politics. But his plan to create a legally guaranteed refuge for the Jewish people in "The Land of the Fathers" was suddenly transformed after his death from Utopia to actuality by

the Balfour declaration; and the un-Christian treatment which has been meted out to the Jews as a result of the new race mythology in the heart of Europe has since that time made Zionism a political and humanitarian necessity.

But the founder of the Zionist ideology curiously enough failed to reckon at all with one fact—that the desired "Land of the Fathers" was not a no man's land but since more than a thousand years an Arabian country. Yet if Herzl ignored this circumstance, British diplomacy was by no means unaware of it. The Balfour declaration was not proclaimed because of human sympathy for the patriotic wishes of what was then only a small part of Jewry, but in order to render more difficult the formation of a national Arabian front. The British wished to drive the wedge of another racial group into the marrow of the Arabian region, and to use Jewish capital in order to Europeanize the country entrusted to them as well as to strengthen its importance both as a military center in the eastern Mediterranean and as the starting point for a new continental route to India. Already at that time most people realized the importance of the harbor of Haifa for the industrial exploitation of the hinterland, and saw in it a new rallying point for the fleet, since the harbor of Famagusta on the Island of Cyprus (which Disraeli had purchased from Turkey in order to insure the defense of the route to the Suez Canal) was no longer large enough for modern men-of-war.

Meanwhile, Jewry had debated violently such questions as whether Zionism was desirable, whether the Jews were a people or a religious communion, and whether assimilation or national self-expression was preferable. Today all these discussions, once carried on with fanatical zeal, have given way to the practical task of creating a home where Jews who are in still increasing numbers leaving Europe will find some opportunity to exist. Even the Jews who were not personally in favor of the Zionist theory have for

the most part been compelled to support Zionism in action. Enormous sums of money and a great deal of skilful planning have made it possible for 200,000 Jews to enter Palestine during the nineteen years since the Balfour declaration. This is a small number compared with the census of Jewry as a whole, or even with the Jewish population in New York, but it is a number which was large enough to revolutionize and to change the industrial, social and cultural history of Palestine.

For centuries past Palestine has been a country that did not live by its own industrial energies. The source of its wealth was the glory associated with its historical places, to which pilgrims belonging to all religions and confessions came. During recent decades the number of pilgrims has dwindled steadily, and, in addition, modern means of transportation have rendered the stay in Palestine so much shorter that the money expended by the individual visitor is not to be compared with that paid in former times. Accordingly, the tide of cash which now enters the country from outside would be very modest if Zionism had not brought new and lavish capital which has made itself felt in a fruitful way throughout the whole industrial and business activity of Palestine.

But still more important than such financial advantages are the methods employed in effecting Zionist settlements. These have transformed economic traditions because the Zionist immigrants do not only increase the value of the soil, and make it possible for the Arabian population—which is for the most part employed in agriculture—to obtain higher prices for foodstuffs, but they also cause the conflict between European methods and oriental methods, and therefore constitute an attack by the mechanized and rationalized labor of Europe against the hitherto existing structure of Islamic society.

Accordingly, the Zionists look upon themselves as pioneers of progress who have opened new possibilities of development to all branches of industrial effort. But it is precisely because of this that the Arabians are driven to violent opposition. When the World War ended, Palestine was still one of the most backward countries of the Near East. Its social structure and its civilization were quite feudal. Now, into this world of patriarchal relationships, newcomers have brought socialistic and capitalistic tendencies, not only as theories, but as actual facts expressed in their mode of living. A world which had a double standard of morality now confronted a group for which the equality of the sexes was axiomatic. While one cannot doubt that such European ideas and the social consequences derived from them are today active throughout the whole Orient, and that they would have made progress even if Zionism had never appeared, it is nevertheless true that the change would have taken place much more slowly

and with less conflict. Above all, Europe is for the Arab a distant and intangible power; but the Zionist Jew is very concrete and tangible. He is a man who is trying to live like a European in "The Land of the Fathers," who in his personal life violates the moral convictions of the Islamic world, and who by reason of his addiction to a more exacting standard of living, even encourages the Arabian workers to demand higher wages and to organize against their employers. By the mere fact that he exists in such a country, the Zionist undermines the traditional structure of Arabian society and endangers the position of those who are in control of that society. From these last, the Arabian counter-attack unquestionably originated; but it had no sooner appeared than it became the expression of popular nationalistic sentiment. During the last two decades the percentage of Jews in Palestine has increased from 10 to 25 percent. The immigrants are people who think in terms of Jewish autonomy, and who yearn for an opportunity to govern themselves. It is therefore unavoidable that with every increase in their numbers the Arabian population is stirred, and made to desire not only to prevent any increase in the number of Jews, but also to conserve the Arabian character of the country. Haj Amin el Husseini, Grand Mufti of Jerusalem and president of the Arab Supreme Court, has during the past ten years made himself a champion of this "conservative defense of our genuine Arabian culture." His family are the richest Arabian landlords of Palestine and apparently an economic power behind the incidents, evoked chiefly by poor Bedouins.

In resisting the Zionists, the Arabs make use of a very clever argument. They demand democratic self-government. Palestine today has a population of about 925,000 Arabs of whom 10 percent are Christians, and about 300,000 Jews. If the body politic consisted of a parliament able to legislate, the Arabs would still be able to prevent further Jewish immigration into Palestine. But London will not respond to this reasoning. It does not wish to sacrifice the political and economic advantages of Zionism. Nor can the League of Nations look with favor upon any development calculated to destroy the chance for refuge which is offered Jews now forced out of Central Europe. Though the Arabs consider this a pro-Jewish policy and a violation of the promise given to confer a measure of self-government on Palestine, nothing can and will be done.

Practically speaking the country is ruled by the mandatory authority, which furnishes all the higher officials and confers upon the High Commissioner dictatorial powers. Despite a large number of "incidents," the British have on the whole succeeded in steering a firm course despite fierce criticism from both sides. The tide of

immigration has been slowed down. The well-informed Zionist is under no illusions concerning the dependence of his cause upon the good-will of Great Britain. He realizes that all he wants would be undermined if London and Geneva should cease to take an interest in the Holy Land.

Under these conditions Zionism has little opportunity to expand quickly. If the same rate of progress continues, it will take from sixty to seventy years before there is a Jewish majority in Palestine. Indeed, more time may be needed, since the death rate among the Arabs is steadily falling by reason of the sanitation introduced by the Jews. But will the Arabs look on quietly for over six decades? And if it comes to a show-down, upon what practical resources can Zionism rely?

Well, Zionism is first of all a reaction to anti-Semitism in Europe. This last is now stronger, so that on the one hand there is an oversupply of Jewish immigrants and on the other hand a growing abandonment by Jews of reliance upon the charms of assimilation. This ideology suffers by reason of the fact that it has no religious basis. The only reason why there are any Jews today is because fidelity to "Jewish election" prevented absorption by surrounding peoples. Unflinching devotion to the Old Testament created the unique phenomenon of a nation uprooted from the soil and yet conserving rules against intermarriage and even familiarity with non-Jewish groups. All this was a commonplace fact in Western Europe down to the era of Napoleon, and may still be confronted in Eastern Europe. But the spirit of the Zionist movement is not this religious rigorism, but the "secularized" nationalistic attitude of the nineteenth century. The program is not based on the priestly mission of the Jews but upon their national individuality; and this last is defined quite as materialistically and biologically as the National-Socialist state itself. The new yearning for Zion and the severe tribulations which have been visited upon the race in Europe, have not sufficed to solve the crisis in which religious Judaism finds itself. In many Palestine settlements there is not only no synagogue, but actually no other religious substitute save intellectualistic discussion. The gulf between the orthodox fathers who cling to the letter of the Old Law and of the "free-thinking" children who look upon tradition as so many cobwebs but find nothing else to take its place, is an impressive fact which the student can study especially in the colonies populated by Eastern Jews. The "fathers" are by far the most interesting. Nationalism is a very poor substitute for religion.

Sometimes one is reminded of the Apocalypse. Ahasver is returning home. Will a new religious yearning come out of an atheism which is now contagious—a yearning which will find more in a living Christianity than in the conquered synagogue?

I have not yet seen evidence to support an affirmative answer to this query.

Nevertheless, the Zionist may eventually prove that the religious factor, so often neglected by "realists," is of the greatest importance. If a time comes when Palestine rather than Europe will hold the chief clue to the political destiny of the Jew—and it will surely come before six decades have rolled by—everything must depend upon whether the Zionist colonials prefer to stand for an idea rather than to revert to the flesh-pots of Europe and America. No one can estimate the future strength of the British Empire. No one can tell either how long it will be possible to prevent union between the 12,000,000 Arabs who dwell between Syria and Yemen and are assured of Egypt's sympathy.

Recent disturbances in Syria and Egypt are only a few symptoms of an unmistakable ferment now active throughout the Arabian world. And perhaps the treaty which Ibn Saud, the "Arab Napoleon," has signed with Iraq is an epochal event in the pre-history of a united Arabia. Ibn Saud is one of the most striking personages in recent history. He has proved that with the help of his Wahabi, the most feared and fearless warriors of the desert, Arab tribes have been putty in his hands. Today Ibn Saud's kingdom extends from the Red Sea to the Persian Gulf. But British cruisers still guard the coast and prevent the conquest of other Arabian lands, and therefore only the ideal of Arabian unity can be maintained. His English adviser, John Stuart Philby, has made it perfectly clear that if British watchfulness is relaxed, Pan-Arabia will be an accomplished fact. What then could Zionism do in self-defense? Only Europe can accord it protection. That, to be sure, may be granted for a long time to come, since Christianity itself would oppose turning over the Holy Places anew to Islam.

### *Prayer in Praise*

My Father, well I know that should I stray  
Into the mammoth caverns of the dark,  
That You would lead me to the brimming day,  
Leaning a little, quietly, to hark  
Unto my heart lamenting, sore afraid,  
My foolish heart. But gently, You would say,  
"O little heart, be still!"

Your Wings are laid  
Against my breast; You brush my tears away.  
This is the world You wove for me, the deep  
And bountiful, strong earth—I touch the sod,  
And life responds like music stirred from sleep,  
Vibrant and sure—O beautiful, my God!  
Then wherefore weep and fear? If I should fall,  
Blinded by night and tears, against a sword,  
I need not beckon or, beseeching, call—  
You will be there to raise me up, my Lord.

ANNA ELIZABETH BENNETT.

# MAGNIFICAT

By SISTER MAURA

**C**ATHOLICS of the western world rejoice on hearing, from time to time, that the process of canonization for this saintly soul or that has been begun. Their joy is keener when the reports concern men and women who, though natives of Europe, have labored in America. But what a thrilling delight it is to know that a daughter of New York, born on the eve of the War of Independence, may very probably receive the supreme accolade!

Elizabeth Bayley Seton first opened her eyes to the light in New York City on August 28, 1774. Her father, Richard Bayley, though an American by birth, belonged to the Bayley family of King's Lynn, Norfolk, England. On the death of his wife, Catherine Charlton, when Elizabeth was only two, he became both father and mother to the little girl, who repaid him with a lifelong admiring love. As a doctor he won distinction by his pioneer work on the inflammatory nature of croup and by his published investigation of yellow fever and its causes; he belonged to the medical faculty of Columbia from its beginning, and he helped to establish the New York Dispensary. When appointed health officer of the port, he labored indefatigably at his post, and helped to secure the enactment of quarantine laws for the state and also for the nation. As a physician, he was sympathetic as well as skilful; and his daughter wrote that it might be said of him, as of Zimmermann, that "he never visited a patient without making a friend."

Elizabeth grew up a fervent Episcopalian. Almost from childhood she was a thoughtful lover of the Holy Scripture, and found in the Psalms especially an immediate response to her needs of soul. Reading somewhere about the religious life as women practise it in the Catholic Church, she wished regretfully that there were a Protestant convent she might enter; but one Catholic devotion she did cherish, that to Jesus crucified, and wore constantly a small crucifix. She had in those days the fortunate habit, which she always retained, of recording her spiritual experiences, her moments of illumination and joy, that they might be a light to her feet in times of darkness. The writings that survive reveal that, even in her care-free girlhood, she lived consciously for God.

New York society soon opened its arms to the charming Miss Bayley. She had a bright, pleasant manner, a lithe, shapely figure, and regular features, lighted by large blue eyes, so dark that they seemed black. As a popular debutante, she remained, surprisingly, watchful in prayer and par-

ticularly vigilant over her acts and motives. Her family and friends were pleased when she made, at nineteen, a very desirable match with William Seton, a prosperous young merchant of the city. Mr. Seton belonged to a family well known in Scottish history, particularly for the gallant part it played in upholding Mary Stuart. Catherine Seton, a collateral ancestor, was one of the "four Maries" renowned in song and story; she remained with the tragic Queen through years of harsh captivity, but finally withdrew to realize her own life's desire by entering a convent. Several years earlier, William Seton had spent some time in Leghorn gaining business experience, and there he had formed an eventful friendship with a young Italian merchant named Antonio Filicchi. As mistress of a wealthy household, Mrs. Seton found a new sphere of good and did much to relieve distress among the poor; she and the companion who usually accompanied her on these Christ-like errands were known as "the Protestant Sisters of Charity."

Seven years passed, and no cloud darkened the sky for Elizabeth and her husband; they were happy in each other and in their five children—Anna Maria, William, Richard, Catherine Josephine and Rebecca. Then came her first real sorrow, the first of those crosses with which her after-life was sown: on August 9, 1801, her father contracted ship fever in his unremitting discharge of duty, and from the first he had small hope of recovery. Elizabeth watched and prayed beside him; he knew her, showed by his looks his pleasure at seeing her, and sometimes stretched out his hand to her. She wrote Rebecca Seton, "Your poor sister's only refuge is the Father that cannot be removed. Oh, how sweet is such a refuge in this hour!" Dr. Bayley died after a week of suffering. Truly, his never-failing love had given his daughter a human idea of the fatherliness of God's infinite love, that love upon which she leaned with perfect trust during the bitterest trials of the stormy future.

Elizabeth's next sorrow, heart-rending as it was, brought her to the very threshold of the Catholic Church. In October, 1803, she accompanied her sick husband across the Atlantic—a formidable voyage in those days—in the hope that the genial climate of Italy would stay the progress of tuberculosis from which he suffered. They reached Leghorn on November 19, only to be conducted to the lazaretto for a month of quarantine, a precaution thought necessary because Mr. Seton was ill. Here, in loneliness, cold

and acute suffering of mind as of body, Elizabeth gave all her strength to cheer her dying husband, and with inspired love winged his thoughts heavenward. On December 27, William Seton died happily in a *pension* at Pisa, with the words, "My Christ Jesus," on his lips. After the funeral Antonio Filicchi and his wife, Amabilia, welcomed Mrs. Seton and her little daughter warmly to their home in Leghorn.

This visit was the crucial experience of Elizabeth's life. For the first time she knew Catholic teaching and practise, and learned to revere profoundly the holy Sacrifice of the Mass, devotion to the Mother of God, and the custom of doing penance for sins (during Lent Amabilia Filicchi did not eat till after the clock struck three). She was taught to make the sign of the cross. When she and her daughter returned to America in April, 1804, Antonio Filicchi sailed with them and during the voyage continued to instruct her in Catholic truth and to unite with her in prayer. His brother, Philip, had given her a letter of introduction to Bishop Carroll of Baltimore, who was destined, in the designs of God, to be the father of the American Sisters of Charity as Elizabeth Seton is their mother. During the troublous months that followed, the bishop's letters brought her light and consolation, Antonio continued to be her tower of strength, and Reverend Matthew O'Brien, of St. Peter's Church, Barclay Street, answered all her difficulties; but she lived in an atmosphere of hostility to the Faith, she heard it constantly attacked, and she saw the future stretch dark and threatening before her. Consistently, heroically, she sought the truth, and at last the light of truth shone in her soul. Her decision was immediate. "If faith is so important to our salvation," she said, "I will seek it where the true faith first began—seek it among those who received it from God Himself."

On Ash Wednesday, 1805, Father O'Brien received her into the Church. Antonio Filicchi was present at the ceremony, and Mrs. Seton gave him a copy of "The Following of Christ," inscribed as a souvenir of "the happy day he presented her to the Church of God." Antonio remained always the friend and brother of her soul, and became a most generous benefactor in times of financial difficulty. He revered Mother Seton as a saint, and on one occasion attributed the seeming miracle of his escape from death to her prayers. A beautiful candor always marked their relationship.

To help in supporting herself and her children, Mrs. Seton opened a boarding-house for the pupils of a boys' school in the northern part of the city. She formed a lasting spiritual friendship with Bishop Cheverus of Boston, and found a helpful director in Reverend Michael Hurley, O.S.A., as long as he remained in New York. The boarding-house was not at all satisfactory, even when her

own sons had been entered at Georgetown through Mr. Filicchi's generosity; and her thoughts turned longingly to Canada where both her sons and daughters could receive an excellent Catholic education, and where she might devote herself to the religious life in some storied convent. Bishop Carroll questioned the wisdom of this plan, and other friends strongly opposed it. Then, providentially, she met Reverend William Valentine Dubourg, president of St. Mary's College and Seminary of St. Sulpice at Baltimore, who interested himself in her future. When she laughingly offered to go to Baltimore and beg for land, he earnestly invited her to come and open a school for Catholic children, and promised to admit her sons without fee at St. Mary's College. This was the answer to her prayers, the reward of her utter trust in Divine Providence. When Elizabeth and her daughters sailed for Baltimore on June 9, 1808, she closed a chapter in her life marked by heavenly happiness, but also by cruel sufferings borne with serene faith.

Archbishop Carroll welcomed Mrs. Seton and her children to their new home, and Catholic Baltimoreans, especially Colonel John Eager Howard, rallied to their support. In September, Elizabeth opened a boarding-school for girls with full registration, and began to reveal herself as an ideal Catholic educator. Companions from Philadelphia, New York, Baltimore and Emmitsburg soon gathered round her, eager to share her life of prayer and sacrifice and devoted teaching; and among them came Cecilia Seton who had followed her beloved sister-in-law into the Church in spite of strong opposition.

Elizabeth, while happily forming the minds and hearts of her pupils to the knowledge and love of God and the practise of virtue, thought longingly of the children of those who could not afford boarding-school fees; and as she longed, the answer came to her desires. Mr. Cooper, a wealthy convert who was studying for the priesthood in St. Mary's Seminary, gladly offered a portion of his fortune to finance a new venture. He wished the school established at Emmitsburg, a wise choice. Thus it was that Mother Seton and four companions left Baltimore on June 21, 1809. She has described their journey with humor, and humility, in this brief paragraph:

We were obliged to walk the [coach] horses all the way, and have walked ourselves—all except Cecilia—nearly half the time: this morning four miles and a half before breakfast. The dear patient [Cecilia] was greatly amused at the procession, and all the natives astonished as we went before the carriage. The dogs and pigs came out to meet us, and the geese stretched their necks in mute demand, to know if we were any of their sort, to which we gave assent.

The early days in St. Joseph's Valley, Emmitsburg, tested the true metal of the little com-

munity: inspired by Mother Seton's words and example, the Sisters suffered cheerfully poverty, cold, hunger and sickness. Archbishop Carroll paid them a consoling visit in October, and administered Confirmation; and the Sulpician Fathers of St. Mary's Seminary were unfailing in kindness. On Washington's birthday, 1810, Mother Seton opened a day-school for the children of the neighborhood, and in May she received her first boarders; by the end of the year she had a very promising school.

As the community grew in numbers, Mother Seton realized the need of a body of rules to regulate the lives and conduct of her daughters; and she wisely decided that the rules for the Sisterhood of Saint Vincent de Paul and Saint Louise de Marillac, though that was established for the relief of the sick poor, might easily enough be adapted for her teaching community. Those French religious, known from their head-dress as Cornettes, form the largest of the various congregations called Sisters of Charity.

Elizabeth's plan prospered. In September, 1811, Archbishop Carroll wrote her:

It has been my endeavor, when I read the constitutions, to consult in the first place the individual happiness of your dear Sisters, and consequently, your own; secondly, to render their plan of life useful to religion and the public; thirdly, to confine the administration of your own affairs and the internal and domestic government, as much as possible, to your own institutions once adopted and within your own walls.

He concludes:

In the meantime, assure yourself and them [her Sisters] of my utmost solicitude for your advancement in the service and favor of God; of my reliance on your prayers; of mine for your prosperity in the important duty of education, which will and must long be your principal, and will always be your partial, employment. . . . Therefore they [the Sisters] must consider the business of education as a laborious, charitable and permanent object of their religious duty.

In January, 1812, Mother Seton and her daughters gladly accepted the rules as definitively approved by the Archbishop and the Superior of St. Sulpice in Baltimore. The first community election gave the following returns:

|                      |                         |
|----------------------|-------------------------|
| Reverend Mother..... | Mother Elizabeth Seton  |
| Assistant .....      | Sister Rose White       |
| Treasurer .....      | Sister Catherine Mullen |
| Procuratrix.....     | Sister Ann Gruber       |

The little congregation continued to prosper. In 1814, at the request of Reverend Michael Hurley, O.S.A., Mother Seton sent Sisters to take charge of the Catholic orphanage in Philadelphia; and three years later, she had the happiness of opening a house in her native city, at the

bishop's request. In 1820, Mother Seton realized one of her dearest desires: she opened a free school in St. Joseph's Valley for the children of those who could not afford tuition fees. This, the first Catholic free school in the United States, was the inspiration of the present parochial school system. The poor children were served a substantial dinner at school, and in cases of need, were given provisions to carry home.

Mother Seton's first care was always the religious spirit of her beloved daughters; she encouraged them on the path of perfection by words of wise, sweet counsel, and by her own gentleness of manner, strength of soul, and the living holocaust of her heart, soul, mind and strength, constantly consumed in the love of God and her neighbor. She was shepherdess of souls at St. Joseph's Academy, and her words and example lighted the future of those who went out into the larger world from that happy valley.

During all Mother Seton's years at Emmitsburg, the Sulpicians were fathers and guides of her little community. Her devoted friend, Father Dubois, the Superior of the seminary, prepared her for the final journey. He repeated in a clear voice to the Sisters gathered about, her last message, urging charity and fidelity to rule and making apology for her faults. She welcomed death with the words, "May the most just, the most high, the most amiable will of God be accomplished forever!" and early on the morning of January 4, 1821, with the prayer, "Jesus, Mary, Joseph," on her lips, she died with an appearance of supreme joy. She had indeed "taken up her cross daily and heroically followed the Master." Should she not be glad in death? From first to last, in joy and in sorrow, in weariness of soul and in weakness of body, in the frequent shadow of death and in the ever-present shadow of anxiety, her life sang *Magnificat*.

### *Confirmation Day in the Afternoon*

Under the snow-white apple tree  
 The little girls are playing;  
 Their dolls about the table sit,  
 The small child-mothers laugh and flit,  
 The apple bough is swaying.  
 The little girls feel strangely sweet,  
 Some holiness is near them;  
 Where lately fell their soft white veils  
 The touch of God enfolds them.  
 Light as the petals in their hair  
 They feel the incense and the prayer;  
 The wind blows white; an oriole sings;  
 They clap their hands to see his wings.  
 Their laughter has a tenderness,  
 They feed their dolls with gentle hand;  
 Their veils are folded carefully  
 With things they dimly understand.

EDITH BENEDICT HAWES.

# A TRYST AT GOMPERS'S GRAVE

By WILLIAM COLLINS

**J**UST off the main traffic artery that runs north through the hills of Westchester lies Sleepy Hollow, the resting place of Samuel Gompers. A few steps beyond the gate we see the plain granite marker, simply fashioned by the loyal hands of the Granite Cutters' Union so long represented by James Duncan, his lifelong friend, and one of the pioneers with Gompers in creating the American Federation of Labor. Here in the quiet of Washington Irving's countryside he chose to rest, where only airplane and automobile carry the message of toiling millions in the Great City.

There are not many visitors. Three times each year, on his anniversary in December, on Labor Day and on Memorial Day, a wreath is placed on Samuel Gompers's grave, by order of the Executive Council of the American Federation of Labor. Occasionally we ride past the gates, on business of the organization he created.

It was about twenty-eight years ago when we first met him, at a friendly bar where he could stand in safety from the Pinkerton and Burns prowling stool pigeons. We were in the same boat with prying railroad "dicks" who got \$10 a day to trail us and report to their benevolent masters. The physical make-up of Gompers surprised us. He was not much more than five feet tall, but the powerful body reflected a great inward strength and gave dignity to his carriage.

The persistence of Gompers in his trade union principles amounted to a passion. With his dawning conscience in the early work he rejected the iron law of wages, the immutable law of supply and demand. He protested that this law was neither natural nor economic, but merely theories to justify existing practises. Those directing industries were seeking control to serve their purposes. Those not participating were treated as industrial spoils. The control built up by these holders of capital rested upon strategic economic advantage, it was just as practical for employees to mobilize and control their economic power as a good counter-strategy.

Organization of wage earners brought economic power that could be used against arbitrary employers in recognition of the human elements of industry. Until mutual rights were established there was conflict, which called for a militancy expressing consecration to high purpose. He favored the widest economic freedom in the pursuit of his principles for both capital and labor, asking no quarter and ready to attack any proposals subversive of the freedom of the workers. To his last breath, Gompers advocated voluntary

principles as the basis for the American trade union, and throughout his very active life maintained his aversion to any theory of economic fatalism. This kept him at loggerheads with the doctrinal Socialists and the welfare advocate that made the worker a ward of the state. His memory of child labor in the cigar industry when he was young caused his feelings to surge through when discussing safeguards for children.

Unemployment he deeply resented as a sin of management. This was another of the so-called natural laws of supply and demand that justified hunger in the midst of plenty. His attitude to his country was that it was big and broad enough to meet every material want. There is no doubt that with his coming to this country in 1863, at the age of ten, he absorbed some of the environment of the Civil War and the abolition of slavery. Lincoln was his ideal American. This cycle of time regenerated economically in Gompers what was reflected politically in Lincoln by the advent of Andrew Jackson to the White House.

When the anti-trust agitation was at its height Gompers declared: "I am not going to join the howl against the trusts; all I ask is to give us the freedom we want to work out our own salvation and give industry the same opportunity." When the advocates of a political labor party attempted to deviate him from his economic principles he answered them that where political conditions touch a man's daily life once, economic conditions will affect it fifty times. To insure economic justice, therefore, the right of counsel maintains. By economic counsel was meant an agent expert with the approval of the individual.

Thus the economic organization is basic. The defensive service of the organization gives freedom to develop constructive functions, provides a way to utilize experience and information. The individual, the shop, the trade council, with all factors of industry, were represented, with the whole of industry moving along the same lines.

It will be noted throughout his entire activities that industry must develop self-discipline. One of his last appeals to industrial managers of the country in 1923, the year before his death, was for them to set their house in order or else the government would have to do it for them. When the question was asked of Gompers by members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary, "What can we do to allay strikes?", he answered, "Nothing." Because of this answer he was accused of a policy of drift. The contrary was true. He wanted to keep the politicians away so that volun-

tary institutions, individual and group initiative, could deal with problems as experience and facts of industry would indicate. The same fear is expressed in his emphasis against the courts in handling industrial policies. He thought lawyers found it difficult to understand that the most important human justice comes through other agencies than political.

Gompers lived more than seventy years. He had great patience, born of a passion for economic justice, and the power to absorb and realize facts as he met them. To him the family was the unit of society. When the changing methods of industry took the mothers and children and placed them in competition with the fathers, he gave them the idea of economic organization that would protect them from exploitation and preserve their freedom. That organization provided security without interfering with or abridging the freedom to vote or worship as they desired.

This was his definite policy in the trade union. It sounds old-fashioned after a depression of seven years. Today there are strange voices heard in the hustings. What was a routine internal problem of a large voluntary family of trade unions, the industrial union, has become a political football for those with ambitions to be heard. This is not an issue. Twenty or more years ago the British labor movement was in the throes of dissolution from this so-called vital issue, yet nothing happened and the national unions maintained their positions and administered their work according to the best interests of those they served. The same will continue in the A. F. of L. international and national unions that make up the voluntary family of trade unions. They will not allow any infringement on this voluntary principle. Workers in mass production industries are getting the widest latitude in their organization work in conformity with these voluntary principles, and are making progress as they assimilate the fundamentals and eliminate the confusions created by outsiders who have no knowledge of the difficulties of organization work in these well-policed and intrenched industries.

Samuel Gompers had to wear the proverbial leather breeches occasionally to straddle this struggling family of trade unions, to keep them in line, but it was always in their own bailiwick, no outside circus stunts were allowed. The propagandists and those with ideas of a political labor party were forever pointing to the success of the British Labor party, but they failed to realize that the British Labor party was successful only when it was made a British product. Only natives of the tight little isle can understand the psychology of a radical Glasgow crowd carrying a banner: "Long live the King, down with capitalism."

Sectionalism is still a political problem of the United States. Economic trade unions under the

Gompers principle of voluntary association overcame political sectional boundaries and eliminated the national boundary that exists between Canada and the United States. The Canadian trade unionist and the American trade unionist have a fundamental and deep spiritual reaction to the voluntary principles of a mutual trade union brotherhood.

Gompers was unalterably opposed to any form of compulsory arbitration of labor disputes. He punctured the glowing accounts that came from far-off Australia and New Zealand with his logic, and time has proved that it would not work, and those countries have found more success in voluntary arbitration and mediation. His position was clearly defined, but not always understood by those outside of industries: that industrial agreements reached by organized workers and organized employers were a real product of industry, developed through experience and experimentation, unrestricted and competent to adjust themselves to the growth of the industry out of which they have developed.

Samuel Gompers was fond of telling the story of the local trade union meeting adopting their by-laws. The last section was the usual one, that Roberts Rules of Order would decide any ruling not provided in the local constitution. A burly workman got up and protested the last section, and appealed to the meeting not to bring in this fellow Roberts from the outside, but that they should settle the differences among themselves. No doubt Gompers's successor, in the midst of his present administration difficulties, can appreciate the point of this Gompers story.

The Rip Van Winkle tradition that permeated the hallowed countryside where Gompers is buried has been disturbed these many years with strange mechanical sounds of a changing order.

There is considerable merit in Gompers's principles of voluntary association that should not be overlooked in the confusion following the prolonged depression.

### *Jacob's Dream*

Now at the end of day a fiery glare  
Burns under the sea and all the sky  
Is filled with colored flames and a sudden stair  
Reveals figures climbing with robes that fly  
In flames, yet neither burning nor charred: their faces  
And hands are stained with gold and luminous lights  
Are in their eyes; then others less glowing their places  
Take, ascending, descending those burning flights.  
The last bright foot has slipped into the night,  
The blazing ladder is veiled in cloudy folds.  
The dark sea ebbs away with whispering weeds,  
Swaying out reluctantly. Our sight  
Cannot penetrate the sky that holds  
The dream—nor prophesy where it leads.

RUTH LANGLAND HOLBERG.

# CAN TEACHING BE TAUGHT?

By GEORGE MORGAN, JR.

**A**S LONG as the treatment of teachers is wrong, what education can hope to be right? Wrong education certainly is in America today, and especially in the education of the teachers themselves. Our sense of values has been curiously distorted. Inspired with commendable zeal for education in the large, we have allowed it to be wasted on matters of minor importance. The teacher, on whom everything else depends, is almost a forgotten man. He is all the more effectively forgotten as a man because he is remembered as a mass. This state of things may be explained historically; it cannot be justified today. Despite the good intentions of our leaders, their efforts are spoiled by false premises which must be challenged and, if possible, amended.

The directors, and consequently the premises, of our educational policy fall mainly in two groups, which for brevity may be called Tories and Technicians. Both need criticism, and each has a point of view from which the other might learn.

The Tories, who control the institutions of higher learning as well as most private schools, maintain several wise traditions to which the Technicians, who run the public schools and teachers' colleges, present a shabby contrast. The conservative formula for teachers runs, "Get an able, educated man and trust him."

Nobody denies in theory that force of mind and character are indispensable, and even among Technicians the idea is dawning that candidates for teaching should be carefully selected. But you cannot select what you do not attract, and so far the public schools have offered more discouragements than attractions to men of ability. From the Tory side of the fence the Technicians' multiplication of courses in pedagogy seems a vain attempt to compensate for poor raw materials. It appears equally vain as a compensation for ignorance. It is a Tory axiom that a teacher should have sound general culture and be master of his subject. Yet Technicians challenge that axiom, sometimes in theory, nearly always in practice. Despite splendid exceptions an appalling number of public school teachers are half-educated, and there is a growing tendency for requirements in pedagogy to waste time badly needed to improve their scholarship.

Tory policy also has a better eye for adult development in its teachers. It trusts them with considerable freedom to decide what and how they will teach. But across the fence it sees life-long slavery to supervisors, promotion requirements and minutely prescribed curricula. The

Tory principles reinforce one another, better treatment attracting better men, and better men justifying more liberal treatment. The corresponding defects in public school policy tend to produce a vicious spiral. Slavish regimentation, poor salaries (compared to the money lavished on equipment), and the state requirements in pedagogy have done much to turn men away from a field of such ill promise. And those who had nowhere else to turn have prompted more regimentation to limit the harm done by their incompetence. The abler men in public school work seek administrative posts as soon as possible.

Looking across the fence from the other side, the Technician beholds his worthy neighbor fixed in a compromising position. For the Tory is also a teacher, yet pretends there is nothing about his job to be learned, and hides behind such half-truths as "Teachers are born, not made," and "A good teacher is one who knows his subject." This stanch lover of tradition has in fact not caught up with the Middle Ages. Seven centuries ago Saint Thomas Aquinas clearly pointed out that teaching is more than knowing.

The Tory is talking nonsense. Teaching is a difficult art in which we all have much to learn. Anyone who kept half awake in school knows that most teachers could do better. Yet the majority of universities and private schools remain frivolously indifferent to this fact. In colleges the mere discussion of the more serious pedagogical problems appears to be bad form, and the most blatant faults of an instructor are seldom mentioned except in undergraduate jokes.

I take it as an axiom that the energies spent on technique and on content of instruction should vary in roughly inverse proportion as one moves up or down the stages of education. In the elementary school subjects are simple, the pupils difficult. At the university a man-to-man approach is sufficient, but the subjects are infinite and never completely mastered. Hence it would be absurd to expect a college teacher to spend a large amount of time on the pedagogical aspects of his work, but just as surely he ought to do more than at present. No formalities are necessary. Some tactful help for the beginner, a general eagerness among the faculty to question and exchange ideas, and above all the belief that better ways may be discovered and are worth trying: these reflect a change of spirit badly needed.

Below college the art of teaching wants more deliberate attention. But how? The Technician has a ready answer. He believes all prospective

teachers should be required to "pass" certain "courses" in pedagogy, of the type which flowers luxuriantly in the teachers' colleges of our day. These courses fall roughly into two groups, practical and theoretical. Let us examine their claims.

The practical group, offering numerous "methods," claims that by reading books and attending lectures one can learn how to teach; it claims to show the neophyte the actual ways in which he should walk. In the more unfortunate cases these methods are prescribed as beautifully neat rules of thumb which stupidly ignore the individuality of both pupil and instructor. Such stereotypes tend to hamper rather than help the beginner to discover and perfect his own style, though the essence of the best teaching lies exactly there.

In all cases there is a fallacy, another form of the mistake for which Technicians laugh at Tories: namely, that knowing is the same as doing. The difficult thing is to translate knowledge into action. By the time the candidate gets a job he has forgotten most of what he was told, and what he remembers he is likely to apply too literally if at all. Even the modicum of "practise teaching" sometimes added is poorly connected with the books and lectures, and barely begins to correct the absurd overdose of precept. These courses in "method" are like teaching golf by giving a man a year of lectures on the swing before you let him hold a club.

The theoretical courses, on the other hand—in psychology, sociology, measurements and so forth—rest their claims on the analogy to other professional training. Schools of education, it is argued, like schools of law and medicine, are needed to teach the sciences which must be known in order to practise intelligently.

When a large body of useful knowledge has been acquired it is indeed reasonable to require its mastery before practical experience begins. In the case of "education," the only question is, does such knowledge exist? To answer this question the reader should sample the literature for himself. There he may learn of such things as "child purposing," "a functional way of life," "personceering," and how delightfully simple teaching would be if only we could assume that the psychology of the child is the same as that of the white rat. Then let the reader ask, "Is this science really necessary for an intelligent teacher today? Is it at all useful? Is it *science*?"

If he does these things I believe he will come to conclusions something like the following. There are a few valuable ideas, but they are very scarce. There is much rubbish, much bad reasoning, and much that is platitude in technical disguise. Undoubtedly some things are being studied in a scientific manner, but we must distinguish the science which is pursuit from the science which is possession. As yet there are few solid results

and not many of these have practical value now. Even the pursuit too often shows more of a superstitious regard for the trappings of science than of the genuine article. With the usual American optimism we have required courses in these subjects as if the fruit they may some day bear were already ripe. We have mistaken a hope for a fact.

If these conclusions are true the claims of theoretical as well as practical courses in pedagogy are invalid. Our schools of education are vastly overexpanded and need corresponding deflation and cleansing. State requirements of such courses should be abolished.

By way of qualification I must hasten to add that these strictures do not apply to all men connected with schools of education. I know of several, and there are doubtless many more, who are keenly aware of the defects in the present system. To them we must look for leadership in conducting the needed reforms.

Nor do I suggest that the schools of education simply be closed. They have an essential function which they will perform all the better when relieved of the present job of training teachers *en masse*. Their function is that of universities generally: to act as clearing-houses of ideas and information, as centers for their discovery, exchange and diffusion. The lower schools will always need the impact of fresh thought about educational problems, and even where our present knowledge is scarce there is good reason to endow research for the benefit of the future—though it should be of better quality than in the past.

These institutes should be entirely of post-graduate status. Their influence would be exerted through publication, the occasional lecture and broadcast; through various information and consultation services; through cooperative investigations carried on with the lower schools; and through rather informal contact with teachers of some years' experience who return, for weeks or months at the university, seeking fresh ideas.

Such changes in our schools of education would do much to place them on more favorable terms with the other university departments, and this in turn would benefit our whole educational life. It would help to heal the divisions between university and lower school, and between public and private school, from which we have suffered. Even Tories and Technicians might bury the hatchet in time.

The problem of how school teachers are to learn their art is still on our hands. Common sense suggests that they should learn it as all arts are learned, whether music, carpentry, surgery or golf: by practise, based on the example and criticism of a master craftsman. If we would have better teachers let them, after obtaining a thorough general education, serve a year or two as apprentices to a group of experienced teachers in a well-run school.

In this way the novice would meet his problems in actual school life, not in abstraction; he would see them as parts of a living whole. The mature teachers would help him to realize and overcome his mistakes in the only possible way, by patient effort, not by memorizing advice from a textbook. But he need not be kept from books that will really serve him. In connection with a weekly seminar he should read such portions of pedagogical literature as he can profitably absorb. By a happy union of theory and practise, his daily contact with the realities of teaching would give point to his reading and enable him, by applying it, to make it more than a verbal possession.

The practicality of this plan is proved by its successful use in a few American schools and in the entire public school system of Germany, where it has been employed for years. That any scheme must be wisely carried out is obvious. Current objection to apprentice training on the ground that it is liable to abuse merely assumes unwise administration. With definite location of responsibility, reasonable supervision and moderate state subsidy (using money now spent for other, less efficient modes of training teachers) the abuses would not approach those of the present system.

A second objection urges that there are not enough high-grade teachers and schools to put the plan in operation. But high quality is a relative matter in any case, and if each generation of teachers were trained by the best 10 percent of its elders we should make steady improvement. To-day the better schools will only employ experienced teachers, with the result that all must begin their experience in second-rate places. Under the apprentice system all would begin in the better schools, and from them a constant influence for better standards would radiate out to the rest.

To sum up, four things are needed to improve the quality of teachers: attracting into the profession persons of higher ability and scholarship, and giving them apprentice training followed by a dignified freedom in adult life.

### *Negress Planting Tobacco*

There on the brown hill moving like music,  
Moving like heat in the fulness of summer,  
Bending the sky to the swing of her shoulders,  
Holding the earth in the width of her loins.

Slow are the dark feet set between furrows—  
Slow as the earth as it turns through its seasons—  
Heavy and beautiful beating their rhythm  
Over the curve of the hill in the sunlight.

Moving like time and like earth and like music  
There on the hill between morning and darkness;  
Knowing no need but the breath of her being,  
Knowing no plan but the seed and the harvest.

SARAH LITSEY.

## *Communications*

MR. DAN GILBERT AND THE COLLEGES  
San Francisco, Calif.

TO the Editor: Mr. Shuster, how old is he? He says Mr. Gilbert is twenty-four—but two years out of college unless he was a phenomenal student. It is then Mr. Shuster's place to be understanding, to make allowances if need be, in the issue he has raised. From the evidence presented it was my impression that Mr. Shuster was more the zealot in the cause of tolerance than Mr. Gilbert was a missionary in the cause of Christ. And, by reason of his many citations, he has taken the issue from the classroom to the study-hall.

Evelyn went to college from a Catholic high school—there would have been no occasion to discuss changed attitudes or beliefs had she come from a public one. There she had been taught that God created the universe in a manner that allowed of the conclusion of a special creation. God performed a special act each day, and, when the whole was completed, Adam occupied his time giving special names to the various creatures. Together with this "dogma" went that impulse for hero-worship which is the distinctive trait of youth.

Mr. Gilbert "conversed" with Evelyn "during the summer recess." From the conversation he learned that she thought "evolution is positively true" (the emphasis is noteworthy) and that the textbook she was using "impressed her with the view that life, etc." Then followed a number of ex parte statements from the conversation, not citations from the text as Mr. Shuster inferred them to be, with the implication that the author wished deliberately to misconstrue.

Textbooks are used for correlation and amplification. What harm is done is done primarily in the classroom where the student can get the fullest measure of the teacher's personality and be affected by his persuasiveness. The complexion of what is said differs often from what is written. There is such a thing as reading what is written and reading into what is written. The student who has listened to the lecturer is the better judge of the intended meaning. When what is said or written about vitalism or mechanistic theories is not explained or countered in the light of Catholic teaching, it has but one effect—the denial of revealed religion. Mr. Gilbert could not have been expected to muster Mr. Shuster's army of dependably authoritative nullifying quotations against his own thesis which, I believe, was a bit of intuition, for which he sought confirmation, not in what the professors were writing, but in what they were lecturing to their students. For such evidence he had either to audit the lectures himself or review the notes of other auditors.

It is thirteen years since I was an unimpressible sophomore at the University of California. I have a faint recollection of one of my chemistry professors reading to us the preface of his projected text, in which the universe was reduced to the chemistry of fire. And, if the Holmes that is mentioned is of the University of California, an

incident that occurred may well be cited here: a chum of mine from Sacred Heart high school, doing more advanced work in zoology, took occasion openly to question the statements of the professor because of their variance with Catholic belief as he understood it. He was contemptuously rebuked with some comment to the effect that when he was better versed in the subject he would be qualified to speak and that if he wanted any information he would see him in his study. No more need be said.

JOHN F. QUINLAN, M. D.

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editor: In THE COMMONWEAL of May 15 I read with deepest satisfaction your article entitled "Dan Gilbert and the Colleges." What a pity it is that that book was not only read but investigated before it went so far. Not having seen a copy I assume that it bears nobody's "imprimatur."

Reference to Mr. Gilbert's book was made in the University of Notre Dame Religious Bulletin for February 19 and 20, 1936. On February 23, 1936, I heard a splendid radio talk by Reverend Maurice S. Sheehy, of Catholic University; wrote to him a note of commendation; made some suggestions, and he sent to me the copies of the University of Notre Dame Bulletins carrying references to Dan Gilbert's book.

If my memory is not at fault entirely I have read praise-laden reviews of the book, and am deeply grateful to you for your splendid report on it in THE COMMONWEAL. Normally (shame to have to acknowledge) I should have accepted the work as correct. Your searching discussion has been good for me so that once again I am reminded that all that so appears is not the precious yellow metal.

All good wishes to you and to THE COMMONWEAL. I am unspeakably glad that it is available to me weekly, for it makes me better.

JAMES A. BEIRNE.

Canton, Ohio.

TO the Editor: I have just read your article entitled "Mr. Dan Gilbert and the Colleges" and I want to thank you heartily for it. Mr. Dan Gilbert has received so much praise that one would be tempted to quote his quotations without verification and what a mess one might get into. One cannot help wondering whether Mr. Gilbert is fully conscious of what he has done.

REV. E. P. GRAHAM.

#### SOVIET MODESTY

Dickinson, N. D.

TO the Editor: Michael Kolcov, Russian journalist, recently published a feuilleton, "In Praise of Modesty," in the Moscow *Pravda*. With fine irony he takes to task those naive souls who see a miracle in everything done in the Soviet States. The ubiquitous phrase of soviet enthusiasts, "the best in the world," is accepted at face value in other countries by the believers in the soviet superman. Kolcov proceeds to take them down a peg.

"The contest is stubborn," he states in his introduction,

meaning the struggle for the triumph of sovietism, "and complacent critique is of no avail. Facts must speak, not flattery. It's the deuce, when boys with milk on their chins step into the battle array and screech owls mingle their hoots with the cries of war."

Look where you will, he continues, turn where you may, listen to any Tom, Dick and Harry, and you are informed that anything a soviet putters with is "the best in the world." The best architects in the world erect the best buildings in the world, the best cobblers in the world make the best boots in the world, the best writers compose the best poetry, and so on and on.

The very phrase, "the best in the world," has become an indispensable part of the vocabulary of every chatterer, of every singer of partizan dithyrambics, of every professional huckster. Without that group of words they are tongue-tied, though the talk be but of bottle washing or the dog tax.

Not so long ago, continues Kolcov, we visited the Moscow library. It was fairly clean, orderly and well-aided. We complimented the lady librarian on her politeness to visitors.

"But of course," she said with grand majesty. "Isn't our library the best in the world? Why, even the foreign ladies have said so."

No one attempts to check this outpouring of self-praise and vaunting; on the contrary, it is abetted and encouraged, particularly by the press. If a business shows profit and progress, it immediately becomes the best in the world, and nowhere else in Europe or America has it an equal. A project has not yet been started, a saloon has not yet opened its doors, a house is just gotten under roof, a film is still in the making—and already the brisk sparrows are chirping in the branches of newspaper-trees about "the finest achievement on earth."

In the making of watches the soviet factories hold the supremacy over the entire world. The painted façades and lamp posts on Petrov Square surpass the grandest avenues in all the world: far inferior to it are the Unter den Linden of Berlin, the Broadway of New York, the Elysian Fields of Italy, the Nankin Road of China.

A movie tycoon, Kolcov goes on caustically, receives a news reporter in his tailor shop. In a voice that resembles the rumble of thunder he informs the representative of the fourth estate:

"With the aid of the finest actors in the world, I shall produce a grand new opus. I myself am pondering my forthcoming screen epic. I have not yet found a suitable theme; but I can tell you now that in originality it shall surpass anything ever done before. I have not yet chosen the location or the cast. We have, however, decided on this: The scenes will be shot in a region which for picturesqueness is unique in the world, and the photodrama shall eclipse anything ever witnessed in this century."

This Lilliputian giant of the cinema—incidentally, also the manager of the pants-pressing establishment—has, mayhap, gotten out of touch with every-day life and its vulgar details; so the reporter must bring him around with a leading question or two.

"You reconstruct trouser seams by the most modern machinery in your establishment?"

"Absolutely. How else? We have the finest there is."

"Very interesting. Chicago has come to Klepavka. Yes, we are growing, we are catching up. But what is that you have over there on the stand?"

"That? Oh, that's an evening paper."

"I get it: a small library for the convenience of your customers. How splendid. Why, you have here even a flower in a pot. Your shop, with its neat, cheerful library, is a glowing example to the magnates of America how they should provide for the needs of the working people—and their lower limbs."

REV. AUGUSTINE STUDENY, O. S. B.

#### WHY NOT A PIUS XI LIBRARY SCHOOL? Wilmington, Del.

**T**O the Editor: Now that we have recently united in an international celebration of the seventy-ninth birthday of our Holy Father, it seems opportune to make a few reflections on a monumental undertaking initiated by this greatest Pope of modern times.

THE COMMONWEAL for February 13, 1929, carried an article by Igino Giordani in which we were made acquainted with the beginning of the modern Catholic library movement. Dr. Giordani in that narrative links the name of Pius XI with those of Sixtus V, Nicholas V and Leo XIII as co-founders of the most famous library in the world. It was on December 20, 1928, that Pius XI, after having opened the Jubilee by saying Mass at St. Peter's, inaugurated the new wing of the Vatican Library. The practical work started with the arrival in Rome, in February, 1928, of four famous American librarians, Dr. W. W. Bishop, Mr. Charles Martel, Mr. Joseph Hanson, and Mr. William Randall whose mission it was to collaborate with the learned scholar, Monsignor E. Tisserant who had already persuaded Pius XI to send four noted Italian librarians to America to study modern methods. For the last eight years the experience and scholarship of noted specialists have been applied to the furnishing, cataloguing, classifying and arrangement of the vast collection. To combine American policy with the needs of an ancient library possessing priceless treasures of manuscript and bibliography is the aim of the Holy Father, thus promoting Catholic culture.

There are among the readers of THE COMMONWEAL many who are wealthy, highly educated and eager to contribute to the endowment of the cause of higher learning for Catholics in America. To them I address these words in the hope that, before his death, Pope Pius XI may have the happiness of knowing that there has been founded to his memory a Pius XI Library School. Such a school has been the object of much solicitude on the part of many members of the hierarchy and of the rectors of the Catholic University of America. The patrons and students of the Catholic University, among whom are represented the 75,000 Sisters teaching in all departments of education in our Catholic schools and colleges, have long anticipated the erection there of a

Graduate Library School. The unprecedented achievements of Pope Pius XI have inspired us; they have given impulse to our multiplied efforts to hasten the day when, like Pius X to whom the Schola Cantorum has been dedicated, our "Prince of Peace" may have honor paid to him as one of the greatest scholars ever to occupy the Chair of Peter. Why not a Pius XI Library School?

MOTHER M. AGATHA, O.S.U.

#### THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY IN TOKYO Boston, Mass.

**T**O the Editor: It is agreed that extraordinary catastrophes like earthquakes, tornadoes or floods require extraordinary help. History teaches that the Church and the faithful have nearly always met such emergencies.

The Catholic University in Tokyo is at present in extreme need. The catastrophe is not an earthquake or a tornado, it is the currency law in Germany. This catastrophe, however, seems to be worse than the above-mentioned because it has already lasted for years. After an earthquake the missionary can appeal to his friends at home; and if he appeals sufficiently he will—though not without labor—find the necessary means to begin again. The Catholic University in Tokyo is entrusted to the German Province of the Jesuits. Hence the currency law in Germany in its present stringency makes any help from the home organization utterly impossible. For nearly two years not one cent could be transmitted from Germany to Japan. The missionaries do everything in their power to overcome the present difficulties. The living expenses have been reduced as far as we reasonably can. The total expenses (food, clothes, light, water, etc.) for one missionary is already down to \$9.20 per month. Every effort is made to make the university a self-paying institution, but it will be some years before this can be achieved. In such a precarious situation we send to you our S.O.S. and appeal to you for help. Without your assistance the work cannot be continued. Extraordinary catastrophes require extraordinary help. And so, please help us.

With regard to the importance of the work I only have to mention a letter from the Vatican which states that His Holiness Pope Pius XI considers the University in Tokyo as one of the most important and meritorious undertakings of His Pontificate.

REV. BRUNO BITTER, S.J.

#### THE SILENCE OF THEOLOGIANs Woodstock, Ont.

**T**O the Editor: Your correspondent, Arthur J. Conway, in commenting on "The Silence of Theologians" makes a peculiar slip. He states: "According to Belloc, Parliament said 'War' by a majority of one vote." What Belloc did say of course is: "The English Cabinet decided by but the smallest possible majority (a majority of one) to enter the war" (Introduction to "Europe and the Faith"). Parliamentary support of the Cabinet's decision approached unanimity. COMMONWEAL readers will appreciate the distinction with the implications involved.

CANADIAN READER.

# Seven Days' Survey

**The Church.**—The second annual Youth Institute of the National Council of Catholic Women will be held at the National Catholic School of Social Service at Washington, June 22 to 27. Among the topics to be discussed are recreation, vocational guidance, homemaking, education and spiritual activities. \* \* \* Two Maryknoll nuns, Sister Martina Bridgeman of Newfoundland and Sister Susanna Hayashi of Tokyo, recently completed an extensive good-will tour of Japan and Manchukuo sponsored by the *Japanese Daily News* of Los Angeles. More than thirty audiences were shown films of the Maryknoll Sisters' work among the Japanese in the United States. \* \* \* Next fall St. John's University of Collegeville, Minnesota, will offer for a selected number of college graduates and college seniors of high standing a general course on Catholic principles and backgrounds with special emphasis on present-day theories of reconstruction. Among the subjects included are the Catholic Revival, the Liturgical Movement, the Theological Basis of Sociology, the Works of Dawson and Maritain, Christian Sociologists like Penty, Tawney and Oram, the Personalist and Communitarian Movement, the Corporative Order and the New Money Theory. \* \* \* Reverend J. Serruot, O.M.I., recently completed the purchase of a year's supply of food, clothing, medicines, books, furniture and tools for the twenty-five missionary posts of the Vicariate Apostolic of Mackenzie, Canada, where 39 priests, 42 Brothers and 66 Grey Nuns of the Cross care for widely scattered communities of Indians and Eskimos. Of a total population of 8,700 some 6,000 have been received into the Church; native converts have been known to travel 200 to 300 miles to attend Christmas and Easter services. \* \* \* The standard set in the recent Plain Chant Competition in the Archdiocese of Armagh indicates that the work of introducing plain chant into every district in Ireland is meeting with considerable success. \* \* \* The new Cunard-White Star liner, *Queen Mary*, has three Catholic chapels all beautifully equipped for the celebration of Mass.

**The Nation.**—Congress temporarily adjourned to permit "Republican members," as Senator Robinson said, "and other misguided persons," to go to Cleveland. Rump committees remaining in the capital showed increasing deliberation so that there was some question if Congress could disband sine die even by June 23, when the Democratic Convention commences. \* \* \* Senator Wagner was bitter when his housing bill, which he had managed to get on the Senate calendar, was held off until there was no quorum. Majority leader Robinson clearly desired the bill to go over to the next session. \* \* \* With the Republicans away, Democratic members of House and Senate finance committees were discussing together and with the President compromises on the tax measure. The House bill received 288 amendments in the Senate, but

the only ones difficult to adjust concerned the tax on undistributed corporate incomes. \* \* \* The new Speaker of the House, Representative Bankhead of Alabama, predicted that Congress would act only on the tax and deficiency bills, the anti-lobby and anti-chain store bills, and the regular annual appropriations before adjournment. \* \* \* The Social Security Act has now been put into such full action that all forty-eight states and Hawaii and Alaska will receive federal security funds by June 30. About \$30,000,000 will be indirectly distributed by the government through the states and territories during the first half of the year. \* \* \* At the end of March, the United States Employment Service had 9,252,488 names in its active file. During March, 440,170 placements were made and 353,260 new applications received. \* \* \* A civil service bill, prepared by Senators O'Mahoney and La Follette, was promised full support by the administration. The bill provides full civil service for the Post Office by January, 1938. The President would place into classified civil service present exempt organizations except emergency agencies with definite expiration dates, including government corporations and commissions. A federal personnel council would be formed to promote efficiency, training, etc. \* \* \* President Roosevelt's trip West started off as somewhat of a challenge to the Republican Convention when he gave a rather scholarly exposition of historical and political science in Little Rock, favoring more liberal interpretations by the Supreme Court but no special change in the status of that body.

**The Wide World.**—Strikes of sufficient magnitude to suggest a general labor walk-out were in a measure settled through the mediation of M. Blum, who secured a promise of wage increases from employers affected. He also gave assurance that Parliament would inaugurate reforms, including the establishment of a forty-hour week and nationalization of the Banque de France. The strikes, which appear to have been spontaneous rather than ordered by the unions, were characterized by great orderliness. Virtually no violence was reported. At times there was danger of a food shortage as truck drivers failed to move shipments of fresh vegetables and other commodities. The new Cabinet was organized quickly to meet the emergency and is definitely of the Left. It was indicated that while M. Blum favored a program of public works to relieve unemployment, he opposed devaluation. Largely on the strength of this declaration, the franc rallied after a bad fall. But many who have defended adherence to the gold standard, notably Professor Charles Rist, professed to see no practical way in which devaluation could be postponed indefinitely. \* \* \* Difficulties between President Juan B. Sacasa, President of Nicaragua, and General Anastasio Somoza could not be patched up, and the chief executive resigned, took a boat, and departed into exile. All was peacefully managed. A provisional government will en-

deavor to carry on till the November elections determine who is to be the new ruler. The United States refused to interfere, and chided South American nations which had too hastily assumed there might be intervention. \* \* \* The Italians were obviously not finding life in Ethiopia too suggestive of milk and honey. Armed bands of natives continued to menace both the capital city and the surrounding territory. The Associated Press reported further executions of Ethiopians, and stated that General Graziani was requiring the Fascist salute even of foreigners. \* \* \* Sir Samuel Hoare returned to the British Cabinet as First Lord of the Admiralty. Italian papers expressed the belief that he would insist upon the recall of the fleet from the Mediterranean. It was not known whether the appointment presaged a change in the British attitude toward problems—notably Italy's annexation of Ethiopia—which are to be aired at the June 30 meeting of the League Assembly. \* \* \* The long-awaited meeting between Il Duce and Chancellor Schuschnigg took place in secret, and it is believed that the first reiterated his determination to protect the independence of Austria. Pro-Hapsburg forces were in evidence, but the Schuschnigg government was evidently proceeding with marked caution. Discussion of a regional Danubian pact was revived, and the voyage of Dr. Schacht to the Balkan states, though designed primarily to settle economic difficulties, may have some bearing on the problem as a whole. The government of Czechoslovakia appropriated money to erect fortifications along the German border.

\* \* \* \*

**The Republican Convention.**—Preliminaries of the Cleveland Convention consisted of a Landon boom and a strong show of opposition to it. The first event of importance was Senator Arthur H. Vandenberg's announcement that he would not be a candidate for the Vice-Presidency. This had the effect of rallying the anti-Landon groups momentarily, the chief stamping-ground being Colonel Frank Knox's headquarters. But on Monday Senator William Borah issued a dramatic interview to make clear that he would not be a party to any move of the kind. Therewith the front against the Kansas Governor appeared to collapse. Mr. Borah indicated that he knew he could not be nominated, and that he was devoting most of his attention to the platform. This must, he insisted, contain a strong profession of neutrality on questions affecting relations between European powers, a repudiation of the rigid gold standard, and a powerful indictment of monopolies. It was reported that serious difficulty was being encountered by those drawing up the platform, owing primarily to irreconcilable views on money and labor questions. On Tuesday evening Senator Frederick Steiwer, of Oregon, delivered a rip-roaring keynote address to the accompaniment of loud applause and hat-tossing. The most deeply appreciated passage was a reference to 1933 as a time "when a President-elect without a conscience refused for four months to cooperate with a President who had a conscience." Late on the same day it was rumored that the minority candidates might agree to support Senator Vandenberg against the

Landonites. Newspapermen left no one in doubt concerning the formidable strength mustered early by the Kansas candidate.

**Strike Review.**—The *Monthly Labor Review* currently publishes a recapitulation of strikes which occurred in the United States during 1935. There were 2,014, the largest number in any year since 1921. "The number of workers involved in the 1935 strikes (1,117,213), however, was almost 350,000 less than in 1934, and the number of man-days idle due to strikes in 1935 (15,456,337) was 4,000,000 less." Twenty-five percent of the strikes (497) were in the textile industries; 198 were in the transportation and communication industries; building and construction, 139; trade, 138; lumber, 135. The average number of workers involved was 555. There were 9 strikes involving over 10,000; 24, over 5,000; and 137 involving more than 1,000. The major issues in 47.3 percent of the disputes were union recognition and other organizational matters; in 38.2 percent they were wages and hours. Wages and hours, however, drew out more workers (672,511) than organization (293,162). The 2,003 strikes which ended in 1935 had an average duration of nearly twenty-four days. There were 510 strikes which lasted a month or more, and 99 continued for over three months. Difficulty is noted in judging the results of strikes, but the compilers estimate that there were substantial gains for the workers in 886, or 44.3 percent, of the settlements. These involved 596,253, or 54 percent, of the workers. Partial gains or compromises went to workers in 18.7 of the disputes, involving 296,885 persons. Little or no gains to workers came from 33.4 percent of the strikes, which involved 161,598. Employers and representatives of organized workers directly negotiated 769 settlements. Government conciliators or labor boards effected 627. Four hundred and fifty-seven strikes terminated without formal settlement, and employers and workers directly concluded 107. "In over three-fourths of the strikes which ended in 1935, American Federation of Labor unions were involved. Unions independent of the A. F. of L. were involved in 13 percent of the strikes, and 8 percent were carried on without union leadership."

**Socialist Solutions.**—The cloud over the teaching and nursing Religious Congregations in Spain has been somewhat lifted by various events including the departure of Marcelino Domingo from the important post of Minister of Education, according to the Madrid correspondent of the N. C. W. C. News Service. Minister Domingo's principal effort to please the Socialist "gallery" was directed toward the removal of the religious from primary schools. This was not possible without causing serious disorder in the school facilities and meant in fact the turning of thousands of children into the streets. He attempted in the Province of Madrid to reorganize the teaching facilities on the basis of secular educators, but nothing was accomplished "since the very thought of what it would cost frightened the provincial authorities." In this province, most of the schools conducted by the

religious are institutions of benefaction. In Santander, the Inspector of Primary Schools drove the Sisters from a school at Reinosa, as the Ministry had ordered. This was a school which Catholics had built and were supporting. The only result was that the children were left to roam the streets until a rescinding of the order was obtained and both Sisters and pupils were returned to the school. The provincial government of Madrid ordered the Sisters to leave the Aranjuez Home for the Aged and the El Pardo orphanage, and so far has not been able to replace them. A Socialist director proposed the removal of the Sisters of Charity from the Murcia Provincial Hospital, but another director, a member of the Republican Union party and a physician on the staff of the hospital, strongly refuted the calumnious imputations of the Socialist director and said, "Apart from political affairs, I must defend them, for their work is irreplaceable." In Jaen, the Socialist Chief of Municipal Charities refused an order for expulsion of the religious because, he said, experience had taught him "to admire the sacred ideal of the Sisters."

*Words from the Wise.*—Commencement audiences listened to a great variety of hortatory discourses. We have picked the following samples more or less at random. His Eminence Patrick Cardinal Hayes told the graduates of the College of the Sacred Heart that "knowledge which is sought merely because of curiosity or for the pleasure its possession gives is of no avail." He added: "Knowledge is valueless unless it brings us to God." At Georgetown Father Edmund A. Walsh, S.J., urged the creation of a national Economic Council made up of distinguished representatives of all groups, including the religions, in order to provide unofficial but effective leadership in designing legislation to serve no special interest but to insure the general welfare. In an unusual discourse at Union College, Professor George Lyman Kittredge suggested that words are at best vehicles which shroud thought in mystery. "Proverbs are oracles," he said, "and every oracle is ambiguous. If it were not, oracle-mongers would soon go out of business; and they were never more abundant than in our wordy and puzzle-headed times." Dr. John H. Finley, addressing the graduates of the New York Stock Exchange Institute, reaffirmed his belief in education thus: "Unceasing education is the means by which we may make this a new earth of freer exchange in experience, goods and information." Commenting on the "new conception of the State," at Washington and Jefferson College, Mark Sullivan insisted that all brands of "totalitarianism" were at bottom varieties of the same idea. "This consolidation of everything into the State, this merging of society and government into one, is a broad underlying principle which distinguishes the new conception from our familiar American one," he told the graduates. At the Catholic University of America, Father Patrick J. Healey asserted that the menace of totalitarianism was particularly serious from the university point of view. Archbishop Edward Mooney, addressing the graduates of Notre Dame University, noted that "the Christian foundations of great and influential schools have

been effectively sapped. The process has gone on almost imperceptibly and from within, like the destructive work of termites in a building."

*Non-Catholic Religious Activities.*—The Executive Committee of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, representing twenty-three religious denominations, issued a statement, June 5, challenging the use of the name "Protestant" by the Black Legion, whose activities "disclosed the extreme of cruelty and social danger to which a red-baiting, anti-Semitic, anti-Negro, anti-Catholic organization easily goes." \* \* \* The Emergency Peace Campaign initiated by the American Friends Service Committee of Philadelphia will continue throughout the summer. Three motion picture theatres on wheels will visit churches, parks and campuses in at least forty counties in thirty states to give one-hour performances of anti-war talking films. College students who have volunteered for the Youth Section of the Campaign will assist at these performances as part of their work for peace this summer. One of the films to be shown is "Drums of Doom," a pre-Hitler German production; another is "Dealers in Death," an exposé of the munitions racket endorsed by the Senate Munitions Committee. \* \* \* Dr. Walter Van Kirk, Director of the National Peace Conference, which comprises thirty-four leading peace organizations, is to appear before the platform committees of the Republican and Democratic parties at Cleveland and Philadelphia to secure the adoption of planks favoring the reduction of tariff barriers by reciprocal trade agreements, cooperation with the International Labor Organization to raise living standards, limitation and reduction of armaments, control of the munitions industry, the extension of neutrality legislation to supplementary war material and cooperation with other powers, the World Court and the League to remove the causes of war.

*Vatican Press Exhibit.*—The United States exhibit at the World Catholic Press Exposition, in Vatican City, has been installed and because of its spaciousness and interest it has been designated by the Central Committee for the Exposition as one of the few places provided with chairs and tables where visitors will be invited to pause for rest and study. As one enters the exhibition room, there is a decoration in the national colors with stars representing the states of the Union. Beneath in colored letters are figures summarizing Catholic activity in the United States: Population, 127,172,000; Catholics, 20,523,000; Clergy, 30,250; Catholic Publications, 4,631; Circulation, 8,990,657; Churches, 18,344; Schools, 10,429; Hospitals, 679. On the largest wall of the exhibit are plaques presenting the papal coat-of-arms flanked by the devices of the National Catholic Welfare Conference and the Catholic Press Association. On a table by this wall various publications sponsored by the association are exhibited which show how it has worked to protect the interests and improve the standards and circulation of Catholic newspapers and magazines. Under the N. C. W. C. plaque are originals of telegrams and cablegrams to the Washington headquarters of the News Service, from its

correspondents in all parts of the world, and actual examples of its regular outgoing news reports. On an adjoining wall is a large map which shows where Catholic publications are issued throughout the country. The facing wall is designed as a portico with seven tall white pillars, and here are displayed, in racks, samples of Catholic publications. On adjoining walls are samples of various activities and special campaigns conducted by the Catholic press. Two golden plaques stand out above the special exhibits, the first representing the Blessed Virgin under the title of the Immaculate Conception, Patroness of the United States of America, and the other, Saint Francis de Sales, Patron of the Catholic Press.

**Religion in Russia.**—That religious persecution continues to be the rule rather than the exception in Russia, even though the crushing of religious observances has been as thorough there as perhaps anywhere in the world, at any period of history, is revealed by specific instances in various places. At Tamboff, reports the Moscow correspondent of the N. C. W. C. News Service, the only priest remaining in this important center southeast of Moscow, and in fact the only priest in that region, was arrested for receiving packages of provisions from Latvia. In Odessa and vicinity, nine priests were arrested for receiving provisions from abroad, even though the food came through the official channel, the government Torgsin. The arrests took place three years after the "offense" which was that the priests offended the prestige of the U. S. S. R. by giving the impression abroad that there was famine and misery in Russia. All of them were sentenced to deportation, most of them for ten years. In Smolensk, parents who permitted their sons to serve at the altar of the Catholic Church were reprimanded and menaced by the G. P. U. secret police, and some of them arrested. The pastor of the church was charged by the G. P. U. agents with spreading "counter-revolutionary literature" because the parish circulating library had loaned to parishioners some pious Russian books published before 1918, the year of the revolution. At Saratov on the Volga, where there is a large German colony, many of whom are Catholics, the splendid cathedral was confiscated by the G. P. U. and a small and poor Russian Orthodox church was turned over to the Catholics, this strategy not only depriving them of their cathedral but also leading to antipathy from the Orthodox Russians.

\* \* \* \*

**French New Deal.**—A New Deal came to France under even more stressful circumstances than to America. Banks were not closed, but gold was fleeing in enormous quantities. A "sit-down" strike was in progress with over 1,000,000 workers affected. They were occupying the factories and stores and printing establishments, and the new Premier permitted them to maintain the illegal occupation since there was practically no violence, and if the 1,000,000 were assembled in picket lines, violence would be almost inevitable. Leon Blum, Socialist Premier, promised the new Parliament a program of reform and was sustained by a 384-210 vote of confidence, his Radical

Socialist, Socialist and Communist backing approving the unsocialistic outline. On June 8, two days after the vote, he negotiated a general settlement of the strike in the name of the erstwhile impotent Parliament. He likewise substituted Emile Labeyrie for Jean Tannery as head of the Bank of France, and M. Labeyrie told the Bank's powerful regents that he was an agent of Parliament. Nothing was done about foreign affairs, the new government frankly waiting for a British lead and consulting various foreign ambassadors for advice. The first measures undertaken by Parliament were labor laws agreed on during the strike negotiations. These were pushed in the Assembly while the strike continued in enormous force. A forty-hour week without reduction in pay, vacation with pay, and collective bargaining contracts were to be made into national laws. These went along with the 7 to 15 percent wage rise obtained directly. The French New Deal agenda includes a drastic reform of the Bank of France; the nationalization of the armament industry; unemployment relief by a public works program and national assistance to local governments for direct relief; raising of the school-leaving age; regulation of agricultural prices; farm debt relief; social security measures; encouragement of sports and tourism; a new tax program. A by-product of these actions is widely expected to be the devaluation of the franc.

**Virtues of Local Relief.**—About two months ago the New Jersey State Legislature, to the disgust of many socially minded citizens, turned over the task of administering home relief entirely to the local communities because it had been unable to reach an agreement on the means of raising the necessary funds for state relief. Since then relief rolls have been so sharply reduced that the Works Progress Administration has begun an investigation of the matter. The New York *Sun*, which for months has been conducting an anti-boondoggling campaign and recently has been making a census of unemployment which indicates that the usually accepted figures are considerably exaggerated, has now turned its attention to the new relief policy in the Garden State and dispatched a special investigator to certain typical communities. On June 8 it published a table showing that in 44 New Jersey cities and towns relief cases had been reduced by 38 percent and monthly relief expenditures by 53 percent since local authorities took charge of the situation. This table prepared "by the research bureau of the Republican National Committee" contains some startling inaccuracies in population statistics, but the general result of its findings seems reasonably reliable. Various explanation are advanced for this curtailment, the lessening of relief demands in warmer weather, seasonal reemployment, the insistence in some communities that able-bodied men work for their relief grants and the elimination of chiselers, who would be known to local authorities. It is not yet determined whether the state's needy families are receiving adequate care under the new set-up. But by calling attention to the advantages of decentralized administration New Jersey's makeshift may point the way to relief methods in other states of benefit to all concerned.

## The Play and Screen

### The Critics' Prize Play

IN MY original review of "Winterset," the play now awarded the Critics' Prize, I expressed doubts as to the desirability of poetic diction in a play dealing with realistic contemporary life. A second hearing has confirmed these doubts, and added others. The speech of "Winterset" is vital, some of it is moving, but it does not seem to me informed with any high degree of poetic glamor. Moreover, on second hearing the only truly moving character becomes that of Judge Gaunt, not because of any glow in his language, but because of the intellectual quality of his lines. Tortured by conscience, forever trying to persuade himself that he had been just in sentencing an innocent man to death, he emerges a truly tragic figure, a figure who all in all is perhaps the most original evocation of mental and moral confusion that the American drama can show. In Judge Gaunt, Maxwell Anderson has truly touched the heights—and plumbed the depths. The depiction of the Judge's torment is at once emotional and intellectual. If there be truth in the saying that the chief law of the drama is the expression of thought through emotion, here is a magnificent example of that law. In the subtlety of his thought, in the intensity of his torment, Judge Gaunt is a figure that is unforgettable.

Less can be said for the other figures. The old Jew I found on second hearing completely inexplicable; Mio, the young man who wants to clear his father's memory, a sort of shadow Hamlet, living not in his own right, but because of his author's desire; Miriamne, the girl, real up to a point and then buried under a shower of rhetoric; Trock, the tubercular gunman, the most living of this group of people. That the plot should be a sort of combination of "Hamlet" with the Sacco-Vanzetti case must not be held against Mr. Anderson; after all, "Hamlet" itself is an old play re-created. The melodrama of "Winterset" is indeed absorbing; it is the philosophical passages and the language which occasionally get in its way. "Winterset" is cast in a sort of free blank verse, and it is this that seems to have most excited the enthusiasm of its admirers, some of whom have declared unconditionally that a great poet has at last entered the American drama. Now in intention, even in conception, Mr. Anderson is certainly a poet; the question is, is he a poet in execution? His lines have weight, force, drive, at times intellectual subtlety, but they have little of that magic of words, that inner glow which differentiates poetry from rhetoric. Had they possessed these qualities they might have been made believable, but in "Winterset" they seemed to me with rare exceptions just rhetoric, eloquent at times and always vivid, but void of wings.

And yet, when all is said and done, "Winterset" remains a real contribution to the theatre, not only in itself, but in the spirit it introduces. In it Maxwell Anderson proves himself first and foremost a prophet of the things of the spirit. To him we can apply a term, hated by the self-appointed apostles of what is denominated "the mod-

ern spirit"; we can call him a moralist. Tired of paeans of praise of the things of the flesh, he has turned to the mind and soul of man. Of such are the highest things in the kingdom of art, and in his depiction at least of one figure, that of the Judge, he has magnificently proved his belief.

GREVILLE VERNON.

### Cloistered

"CLOITRÉES," from France, is a most unusual academic documentation, authentically recording, in a peacefulness that seems natural and a delicateness that is beautiful, the simple and inspiring life of the candidate in a convent, moving with impressiveness from the renouncement of the outside world by the novice, to the final vows and life-long seclusion thereafter.

Both the subject-matter and the manner in which it is treated are reverent and revealing, obviously presenting a rare application of the motion picture to contemporary interpretation. The study was filmed by Pathé Cinema, of Paris, at the Motherhouse of the Good Shepherd near Angers in France. The sponsors advance it as the only motion picture ever taken within a cloistered convent, claiming, of course, the full permission of the Church, an extraordinary feat. It is valuable not alone for its inspiring religious significance but because it visualizes in such stark sincerity the simple life of a hitherto hidden world.

Schools, churches, libraries, study groups and such non-commercial institutions, among others, will find the production especially interesting, possibly deeming it advisable to make the document permanently available. The National Board of Review of Motion Pictures, representing an absolutely non-sectarian national group of public photoplay reviewers searching for the "better film," expresses the opinion that while "particularly appealing to Roman Catholics," "Cloistered" would be found "impressive and moving to any unprejudiced person." Even New York's daily newspaper critics, reputedly steeped in the sophistication of Broadway theatricals, were generally enthusiastic, being especially moved by the climax of great dramatic intensity that comes with the beautiful ceremonious investiture at the taking of the final vows.

There is, of necessity, a thread of story to preserve continuity. It is, however, entirely impersonal and clearly non-synthetic, starting off with the application of a young lady from the picturesque French countryside for admission to the motherhouse. The five years of the novices as a group are traced through the simple daily activities, prayers, and academic and manual workings. The camera records, too, with much interest, the life of the nuns and the Magdalene Sisters, each of the three groups being segregated from the others within the convent walls.

Director Robert Alexandre gets admirable depth and perspective from among the shadows of the corridors in which the nuns move with solemnity. Reverend Father Matthew Kelly repeats an English narration, explaining the daily activities and ceremonious significances in a voice of splendid diction. There is an accompaniment of fine church music, both organ and choir.

JAMES P. CUNNINGHAM.

## Books

### Some Recent Biographies

ALL OF Hamlin Garland's reminiscences, whether one likes them or not, are valuable Americana which clarify sections of the country's recent intellectual history. Though "Forty Years of Psychic Research" leaves one half convinced that the author is gullible and half persuaded he has met with strange goings on, it chronicles some aspects of a movement that is still important. Mrs. Smiley was the most interesting of Mr. Garland's mediums. We shall confess that she must have been honest. Some of the others leave us sceptical. But by all odds the most interesting part of the volume is the concluding chapter, in which the author concedes that his experiments have led to no very tangible conclusion. This route to the "supernatural" seems to leave weariness and uncertainty behind, the crop of resultant theories by no manner of means compensating for the time spent on tilling the field (Macmillan. \$3.00).

Most people think of Noah Webster as the progenitor of a sturdy race of dictionaries. But Harry R. Warfel, author of "Noah Webster: Schoolmaster to America," succeeds in sketching a hard-working New Englander with a passion for research and integrity. He was successively a teacher, an editor, a pamphleteer, a dabbler in medical history and a defender of the Constitution. Indeed the Webster fingers were in so many pies that one marvels to find them all eventually concentrated on lexicography. The man must have been a little tight-lipped, a trifle stern. Mr. Warfel's book is scholarly—an impressive achievement which seems as readable as the subject permits. Perhaps its incidental value as a commentary on the New England past is greater than its immediate biographical significance (Macmillan. \$3.50).

Dr. Adolf Lorenz is a great physician who has led an interesting and varied life. A survey of his experiences from the vantage point of eighty-three provided material for "My Life and Work"—350 odd pages of text which range from orthopedic surgery to the delights of living in Vienna. Doubtless the most valuable section evokes the memory of war years, while the sketches of life in the United States are the most amusing. A great deal of entertainment as well as information is to be gleaned here, but the book seems too obviously ghost-written to make a deep impression. Nor is the mind revealed comparable to that which rendered Dr. Alexis Carrel's memoirs so interesting (Scribner's. \$3.50).

Though written to serve as a typical campaign document, "Borah of Idaho," by Claudius O. Johnson, affords a summary of events in which a political figure of great significance has been a guiding influence. It also describes competently though not brilliantly the Western background from which Borah emerged—a background at once so homespun and so responsive to political manipulation that to know it is an important part of becoming acquainted with the nation (Longmans. \$3.00).

"Genghis Khan," by Ralph Fox, is a book in the Nevins mood. Old, unhappy, far-off things are dealt with

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## NEXT WEEK

THE "RED DRIVE" IN SPAIN, by Lawrence A. Fernsworth, distinguishes certain of the separate elements in the Spanish proletarian movement. The Communism of Moscow—the official Third International—is only a minor force in the present Left activity in the peninsula. Mr. Fernsworth introduces more of the revolutionary legions and particularly the Anarcho-Syndicalists, the extremely Spanish and theoretically most anti-Moscow workers who are more numerous than any but the Spanish Socialists. . . . A BELGIAN HERO COMES HOME, by Leo R. Ward, is a short article that describes the final cortege that brought the body of Father Damien from Antwerp, through his native village of Tremeloo, to its resting place in the poor college Church of St. Pierre in Louvain. We are told what Father Damien already means to the people of Belgium who welcomed him. . . . Dr. Goetz Briefs describes THE DECAY OF LIBERALISM. This continues the sharp dissection commenced in our issue of May 8, and gives historically the interplay of "intellectuals" and "liberals." Sceptical enlightenment finally gives way to new dogmatic, unarguable values, and liberalism goes. Liberalism was wedded to an economic individualism, the author maintains, which has lost utterly its eighteenth- and nineteenth-century appeal. . . . PORTRAIT OF IRVING BABBITT, by Austin Warren, is a beautifully written biography of the American humanist and an interpretation of his much-discussed tenets. Mostly, however, it is a picture of a man whom his most obdurate opponents must always admit was a charming, and even great, university teacher. Babbitt's fame as such is in no way bound to the popularity of what for some years has been enclosed in quotation marks, "humanism." . . . Charles Willis Thompson, the acute and truly phenomenally informed political reporter and historian, has been studying the developments in Cleveland, and is writing for us an alaysis of the words and actions of the massed Republicans.

romantically, considerably more admiration being expended upon the strangeness of an oriental adventurer than upon his intrinsic significance. But within limits he adheres to the record, and creates what is—so far as the present reviewer can judge—a reasonably accurate narrative of politics in Tatary of long ago. It is the story of an eastern Napoleon, builder of a crumbled empire which European bourgeois all but inherited. There are remarkably well-written pages, but as a whole one rather languishes to music in a monotone. A deep impression is left by the personal experiences which the author garnered in the Orient (Harcourt, Brace. \$3.00).

Sympathy bordering on hero-worship makes Lincoln Lorenz's "Life of Sidney Lanier" a charming if not sharp-edged book. All the essential biographical facts are here, but the most important of Mr. Lorenz's achievements is the complete revelation of Lanier as a "mystic." He was of the race of Chivers—Southern Emersons both, who relied less upon insight after reflection than upon feeling. It is difficult to resist the conclusion that Lanier is even therefore badly dated. Yet this would be correct only if America were really what current literary New York assumes that it is.

PAUL CROWLEY.

## Imagination and Restlessness

*Main Line West*, by Paul Horgan. New York: Harper and Brothers. \$2.50.

IN "MAIN LINE WEST" the author propounds the thesis that the Western American has imagination and restlessness. Symbolic of the one is the white wooden church, and of the other the railroad tracks. The story centers about these two symbols.

Daniel Milford, a traveling salesman, stops overnight at a farmhouse to get under cover from a driving Kansas rain. Here he meets Irma, pure, beautiful, smoldering, who marries him much to his own surprise, and takes to traveling with him. But Dan grows restless in spite of the fact that they are always moving on, and Irma is going to have a baby. They reach a small town in California where Dan buys a store with living quarters above it, presents the deed to Irma and quietly disappears. Danny is born; Irma struggles to make a living and several years later takes to the road as an evangelist. Success is hers for a time, but with the coming of war to America she finds herself preaching an unpopular doctrine—peace. She is attacked and stoned by a hysterical mob while she is conducting a revivalist meeting. This treatment plus the fact that she is already ill causes her death in the day coach of a train that was taking her and Danny back to California. Danny, her son, is left filled with bitterness, rootless.

Mr. Horgan has written an interesting novel but that he has truly portrayed the "moving" Western American is open to question. Certainly Daniel Milford is not a phenomenon peculiar to America. He is an international and irresponsible rover. Irma, it is true, could hardly have happened elsewhere. One can well believe that she "got religion" in California, and that when she started out

preaching she hadn't the faintest notion what it was all about. Yet her religion is pure emotionalism and the hysteria which caused her death is the direct result of her own revivalist methods. Surely this is not the achievement of the little wooden church. A bit of imagination might have led Irma to preach "Love thy neighbor as thyself," rather than "Thou shalt not kill." And the spiritual significance might have been evident even to her self-righteous congregation.

There is a coldness in Mr. Horgan's style which generally keeps one from being much concerned about his characters. But certain incidents stand out vividly. For example, his description of the Kansas landscape and evening in the farmhouse. Or again in scenes of horror he succeeds almost too well. The tramp who tortures Danny, and Brother Trainor are two of the most loathsome characters imaginable. One detects a rare sensitiveness in the author and a genuine distaste for cruelty, but one ends by wondering whether he himself is rooted in the soil because the settings are all one setting: they might just as well be Connecticut or California.

DORIS CUNNINGHAM.

### Erosion and Man

*Little Waters: Their Use and Relation to the Land, by H. S. Person with the cooperation of E. Johnston Coil and Robert T. Beall. Washington, D. C.: United States Government Printing Office. Free upon application to your Congressman.*

THE COVER of this official report, prepared jointly by the Soil Conservation Service, the Resettlement Administration and the Rural Electrification Administration, indicates unusual news value: it is very good looking. The whole book, eighty-two pages long, printed in good type, excellently illustrated, and written well, not technically and in a style that simply produces a cumulative dramatic effect, is definitely new for the Government Printing Office. "Little Waters" is a discussion of the hydrologic cycle and how it has been affected by "impetuous man" and how it may be affected by men working with nature, "man and nature, inc." It is a study of nature from a thoroughly realist and humanist viewpoint, and develops in every paragraph a tremendous interest in conservation.

Erosion has destroyed 100,000,000 acres of American farm land—an area equal to Illinois, Ohio, Maryland and North Carolina. Another 125,000,000 acres are seriously impaired, and another 100,000,000 acres are threatened. This devastation and its appalling concomitants came because we have heedlessly upset the natural circulation of water from the atmosphere to sea and atmosphere. In two pages of the most transparent definitions this whole tragedy is implied, and in a chapter it is explained, documented and visually illustrated. Not only the physical acts of cutting forests, turning under grass, overcropping and rushing water with its vast stores of soil to the sea are brought to mind, but the economic and political and personal acts as well. The basis of conservation must rest, it is shown, upon the retardation of

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water's circulation as nearly as possible to the natural speed. Absorption into the soil and infiltration into subterranean reservoirs—ground water—must be encouraged. This program brings the title, for it is through ponds and streams and little lakes that work is largely done.

The lines of action through the individual farm and small community, drainage area, county, state and federal governments fascinate the reader and almost necessarily enlist assent and enthusiasm for the conservation program. The political and economic program that must be integrated into it is not, of course, elaborated, and that is the most difficult part. The broad conclusion, however, is stated: "Many things must be done by individuals, others by private organizations, while some can be done effectively by governments only. The motive of self-interest must be strengthened and enriched by the motive of national welfare; and all the strength of science, education and organization brought to bear on the problem. . . . If we desire to conserve and wisely use our resources, government on every level must stand ready to cooperate by doing its part." One should note that this book is an absolute plea to conduct ourselves in accord with natural law, scientifically apprehended and philosophically appreciated. The plan developed starts with the "raindrop and rill" and so the particular farmer. Its climax is little waters. Its most important operations are not money operations, nor even machine operations. Economically it is explicitly distributist. Its ideal, as mentioned throughout and pictured in the postscript, is the restoration of agrarian production, culture and good life.

PHILIP BURNHAM.

**Destroyed Authority**

*The Art of Ministering to the Sick*, by Richard C. Cabot, M.D., and Russell L. Dicks, B. D. New York: The Macmillan Company. \$3.00.

**T**HIS book will stir up conflicting emotions in the Catholic reader. First of all, he will be struck by the beauty, the clarity, the wisdom and the understanding of the medical contribution presented by an outstanding clinical teacher and a man of letters, Dr. Richard C. Cabot. In contrast to this, he will be shocked to learn the practical effect of higher criticism as it eliminates the Divinity of Christ, and replaces it by scientific humanitarianism. Private interpretation and individualism has so far destroyed any authority the minister of God may have had as to voice the author's apology, "But can the Protestant minister be anything but a nuisance?" (page 3).

The authors are both exceptional men. They team well. Their cooperation is the result of mutual understanding, education and culture. Together, they have accomplished and will accomplish a great amount of good. Break up the team, neglect the technique suggested by this volume, and what becomes of the average minister, in casual contact with the average physician? Can his position be anything better than the average welfare or social worker? Would it not seem that the prerogatives of the cloth have been finally eliminated? The loss is great and, I fear, complete. Intensive psychological re-

adjustment along medical lines will never resuscitate the authority which has been destroyed. Despite the best will in the world, the minister no longer represents Divine authority for the average layman.

This loss is emphasized by the potential spirituality of the volume. The doctor not only bears witness to his deep convictions of the existence of God, but makes repeated suggestions along lines which appear novel to him, for a closer union with the Divine. His chapter, "Vis Medicatrix Dei," lays a magnificent scientific background, not only for the miracle of our normal existence, but for the rational of the occasional authentic miracle. He chooses to interpret "Vis Medicatrix Dei": "By the goodness of God." Does he not mean "By the grace of God"?

The authors invite the reviewer's reaction to several specific chapters. Space does not permit more than brief comment. The term, "growing edge," will immediately appeal to the biologist. He has seen this "growing edge" and will see it in action. May I not be permitted to suggest, however, that when applied to the spiritual faculty, a faculty without extension, having neither size nor parts, this symbol loses its appeal? "The sense of growth," i.e., the growth of the spiritual faculty, has a familiar ring. Under the more popular terminology, "the spiritual life," in its human manifestations, or the natural manifestations of the "mystical life," we would recognize this as a description of the early infancy of a fully matured, very old and greatly loved friend. "Directed listening" is probably one of the keys to the strength of the contemplative orders. The description of this technique is excellent and is bound to be helpful, particularly for those afflicted with "loquorhea" (too much talk). The authors' phrase, "We listen through a theory with a view to judgment and action," indicates the manner in which they have treated this question. The religious orders of women must have anticipated by several hundred years, the value and the use of "quietness." The authors must have been somewhat out of sympathetic touch with these groups, not only in this connection, but in the rather hasty comment which will naturally be translated into the present tense. "The nurse was once a Sister, ignorant of the technique of modern nursing, but persistently concerned about religion." A footnote to the effect that this is a historical reference, that some Sisters are actually trained nurses, would protect the authors against the charge of provincialism. "Vis Medicatrix Dei" might well appear in pamphlet form for distribution to both patients and physicians to say nothing of medical students and nurses. It is the *via media* bridging the gap between the natural and the supernatural. With this chapter as an approach, who can question the effect of sacramental grace in the prophylaxis and the cure of disease?

I like this book because it is an able prolog to the play with which we are so familiar. It will break down prejudices against the idea of the spiritual life. It is easy to believe. I like it because of its familiar atmosphere of culture, because of its modern interpretation of old themes, and in spite of its amateurish treatment of profound spiritual truths.

PALUEL J. FLAGG.

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**An Irishman in Europe**

*Traveller in Time*, by Mairin Mitchell. New York: Sheed and Ward. \$2.50.

MISS MITCHELL travels around a remarkably large part of Europe and through various epochs of time gathering rather definitely too impressionistic sketches along the way. The book is best for Irishmen who speak good Gaelic. This is in spite of the fact that it is written in very good English. The first interest of the supposed traveler, a Colm MacColgan, is to find the Irish associations which are scattered so romantically throughout Europe, especially in the cities of England's most traditional enemies. Usually Colm doesn't stay sufficiently long in one place to do enough, only calling up some of these Irish associations. There are exceptions to this: in the Basque country he evokes charmingly the general atmosphere; in central Europe, although very much on the run, he brings home remarkably well the troubled and poverty-stricken conditions; and in some other places he is about equally successful. It is a compromise between a travel book about the rest of Europe and an Irishman, but the scales are heavily weighted. Miss Mitchell's hero and Europe would have been clearer if he had tarried longer in fewer selected places.

**The Plain People**

*Roots of America*, by Charles Morrow Wilson. New York: Funk and Wagnalls. \$3.00.

FOR PLEASANT fireside reading, or its summer equivalent—hammock reading—this book is perfect. It is not important in the wearisome meaning of that word; it does not try to prove anything either false or true. It simply describes from rich first-hand experience various types of Americans that the author believes are the backbone of the country, home-folk, plain people, who would not know dialectical materialism from an azimuth, but who do know hard work, kindness and neighborliness, and common sense, though, sad to say, practically none of them knows spirituality of any but the vaguest kind. "Roots of America" is an understanding book.

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